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# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

# BULLETIN

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## Shinran Behind the Scenes

This month we are observing Ho-on-ko, the memorial of Shinran (1173-1263), expressing our gratitude for his teachings. However, there isn't much documentation of his personal life outside of the letters of his wife Eshin-ni, so we must be careful of books, movies, manga, etc. that portray his life. All these versions are just someone imposing their own agenda on Shinran's life story. For example, the 1987 film "*Shinran shiro michi*" has Shinran organizing a workers' uprising at a steam-punk factory reflecting the director's labor union activism.

At the 2015 symposium on the Larger Sutra held in Berkeley, CA, panelist Father James Fredericks, a Catholic priest and noted scholar on Shinran's teachings, said that Shinran spent about twenty years as a "pastor," the same amount of time he spent as a monk on Mt. Hiei. By "pastor," Fr. Jim said he meant Shinran spent that time interacting with people who were looking to him for spiritual guidance, as opposed to someone in the role of a socially isolated monk or scholar.

What did Shinran do during those years serving as a pastor? We really don't know except for the few details Eshin-ni notes in her letters to her daughter Kakushin-ni. From Eshin-ni's letters we know Shinran and his family moved from the west coast of Niigata



Rev. Patti Nakai  
Resident Minister

This article continues on page 6 column 1.

## The Nature of Oneness

Oneness. The idea of Oneness is central to the Buddha-dharma. In Buddhist practice, what is Oneness? In America, we usually speak of oneness as an ideal, a goal. Unity or harmony among all people is oneness. Equality regardless of race, nationality or gender is oneness. Compassion for those in need is oneness. Buddhist Oneness goes beyond these ideals. Buddhist Oneness is not a goal. It is the reality of life.

One of the best explanations of Oneness occurred at an Eastern Buddhist League convention I attended. During the question and answer period someone asked, "What is Oneness?" A panel member replied in a simple, understandable manner.

Holding up a sheet of paper, he asked, "Do you see a cloud in this paper?" No one responded. Again he asked, "Do you see a cloud in this paper?" "You must see a cloud in this paper," he continued, "because without a cloud there is no rain. Without rain there is no tree. Without a tree there is no paper." He then asked, "Do you see a steel mill? You must see a steel mill because without the mill there is no steel. Without steel there is no ax or saw to cut the tree. No tree cut down, no paper." The audience was beginning to understand his point. Chuckling, he asked, "Do you see Wheaties? Loggers work hard and need a good breakfast.



Bill Bohlman  
BTC President

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

This article continues on page 7 column 1.

## NOVEMBER 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* <<<

- ✿ November 23—**Ho-on-ko seminar with Rev. Ken Yamada** (see insert for details)
- ✿ November 24—**Ho-on-ko (Shinran Shonin Memorial)**

### Regular Temple Services

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

### Temple Meetings & Community Service

- ✿ **Bulletin mailing**—2<sup>nd</sup> to last Friday every month, 10 am; volunteers welcome. This month: November 22.
- ✿ **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Friday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: November 8.
- ✿ **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: November 17.
- ✿ **Upaya Helpers** (refreshment service, community outreach, ping pong, etc.)—Albert Gonzalez: [albertgbtc@gmail.com](mailto:albertgbtc@gmail.com)
- ✿ **Cook It Forward** (feeding unhoused persons)—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CookItForward/>

### Meditation & Buddhist Education

- ✿ **Dharma School (for school-age children)**—Sundays, 11 am. This month: November 10, November 24.

- ✿ **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. October 30 start for current four-week session. Next session starts in February 2020. E-mail Nancey Epperson: [naepperson14@gmail.com](mailto:naepperson14@gmail.com).
- ✿ **Meditation**—Sundays, 9 am and Thursdays, 7:30 pm. First-timers: come 10 minutes early for instruction.

### Social & Cultural Activities

- ✿ **Aikido** (“cooperation, not competition”)—Sundays, 5-7 pm. E-mail 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. This month: November 16.
- ✿ **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 pm.
- ✿ **Qigong** (Chinese Movement)—Tuesdays, 11-12:30 pm. 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. E-mail [kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org](mailto:kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org) to confirm.
- ✿ **Ukulele Group**—Tuesdays, 1 pm. E-mail 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, April Kellman

**Feedback and Submissions** Questions, comments, corrections and 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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## Temple News 🌸 September 2019

- 🌸 9/1 Monthly memorial service. \*\*\* Memorial services discussion group met.
- 🌸 9/7-8 Rev. Nakai spoke at Ho-on-ko Saturday Discussion and Ho-on-ko Sunday service at Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Temple.
- 🌸 9/8 Dharma School service with guest speaker Lowell Thompson, local artist.
- 🌸 9/15 Regular Sunday service.
- 🌸 9/18 Rev. Nakai attended meeting of the Ravenswood interfaith clergy group at Bethany Retirement Home.
- 🌸 9/20 October bulletin mailed. \*\*\* Rev. Nakai conducted ashes burial service for Shizue Nakanishi at Montrose Cemetery.
- 🌸 9/21 Asoka Society met.
- 🌸 9/22 Fall Ohigan service. \*\*\* Special budget meeting. \*\*\* Rev. Nakai conducted ashes burial-at-sea service for Fujiko Okada on Lake Michigan.
- 🌸 9/25 Lecture by Dr. Kenneth Tanaka, professor emeritus of Musashino University, Japan.
- 🌸 9/29 Regular service. \*\*\* Board of Directors met.



At the September 8 service, Lowell Thompson presented his views on healing Chicago's racial divide.

photo by Karen Baier

## THANK YOU!

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

### Service & Hospitality

- ✿ **Sunday Service Participants:** Ruth Abbinanti, Bill Bohlman, Nancey Epperson, Glenn Fujiura, Alice Murata, Gary Nakai, Stanley Oda, Diana Schoendorff, Miriam Solon, Lowell Thompson, Liam, Beatrice
- ✿ **Lay Leaders:** Karen Baier, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Mary Harvey, Lynnell Long
- ✿ **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga
- ✿ **Audio:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- ✿ **Bulletin Mailing:** Dennis Chan, Antoinette D'Vencets, Ed Horiuchi, Haru Ito, Sadae Kasamoto, April Kellman, Alice Murata, Mary Ozaki, Ruby Tsuji
- ✿ **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Genevieve D'Aquila, Dharma School, Haru Ito, April Kellman, Mary Ozaki, Alice Murata, Ruby Tsuji, Upaya group

### Temple Keepers

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

**Naomi and Linda Mounce** were inadvertently omitted from the acknowledgements for contributing Obon refreshments. The *Bulletin* regrets the error and thanks them for their delicious homemade cookies.



## Temple Memories



Sunday School Teachers Kay Ikeuye, Reverend Kubose, Bob Nakajima, Haruko Tanaka, Kiyo Omachi, Chris Moy, Jean Miyake, Minnie Kubose

*Photo courtesy Mary and James Numata Photograph Collection, JASC Legacy Center*

I was an assistant Sunday School teacher as a teenager. When the teacher got married and moved out of town, I became the teacher at 17 years old. I had a class full of five-year-olds. At that time they were not advanced as kids are today. Most of the time, they just drew pictures or colored from a coloring book. I also tried to teach them the Golden Chain. It took a very long time. I don't remember if I succeeded. I received a plaque for teaching for many years.

—Kiyo Omachi

Editor's note: Kiyo's mother, Mrs. Miyoko Nozawa, was a BTC Japanese School teacher for many years as well.



Rev. Kubose wields the kine while Glenn looks on

In our Fujiura family lore, I believe I was the first to try the very first mochi created at BTC's very first mochitsuki (1965?). I recall Rev. Kubose taking it off the assembly line and asking for a taste-testing volunteer and handing it to me.

—Glenn Fujiura

## Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I am an admirer of Ann Yi, although I have never had the privilege of meeting her. I know her only because of the many years that she served as editor of the temple Bulletin, where, in my humble opinion, many improvements were made and were appreciated. So I was very happy when she was elected president of the board, which requires a large amount of duties plus the submission of the presidential report monthly in the Bulletin, the exact publication to which she had previously given so much time and energy.

In her articles Ann revealed many things about herself and the goals that she intended to accomplish. The honesty and willingness to tell about herself, so open, with a "look, this is who I am" attitude, was very refreshing. I am so sorry that personal reasons have come up which forced her resignation. My sincere hope is that everything will clear up, health or otherwise, and she will be able to return to us. I'm looking forward to again smile and enjoy reading about her thoughts and observations.

—Ruby Izui



We were happy and honored to have Rev. Gyoko Saito's family join us for the 75<sup>th</sup> celebration! They are seated in the second row. From left to right: Maya Chin, Ron Chin, Jonathan Rosenberg, Max Saito-Rosenberg, Dawn Saito, Renee Saito, Naomi Saito. Not pictured (apologies!): Shin and Brett Saito.

Shin recounted tales of mischief during Japanese School, and Dawn found herself in several of the Dharma Sunday School photographs.

More at <https://buddhisttemplechicago.org/>





Design by Robert Doi

## Temple Anniversary

Many, many thanks to the many, many people who contributed to make the 75th Anniversary celebration a huge success. We love and appreciate every one of you!



Board member Albert Gonzalez models the anniversary tee

"We need somebody good-looking to model the t-shirts ... Where's Albert?"—Rev. Nakai

Pins and limited numbers of anniversary t-shirts are available at temple. Or order online here: [tinyurl.com/BTCshirtsandpins](http://tinyurl.com/BTCshirtsandpins)



Rev. Tomoyuki Hasegawa and Rev. Patti Nakai at bottom left

More than 150 people filled the hondo for service and attended the anniversary luncheon. It was great to see so many old and new friends together to celebrate.

The taiko groups played three rousing selections, a delicious lunch was eaten, prizes were raffled and friends got a chance to catch up and enjoy each other's company.



A triple prize winner!



Another multiple prize winner



Tracy Ito calls the lucky winners.



Discovering Re-Ment (Japanese toys)



Winner winner chicken dinner



## Shinran Behind the Scenes

(continued from page 1)

to the area close to Tokyo, stopping at several points along the way. Then in his early 50s (old age in those days), Shinran returned to Kyoto to devote himself to writing, while his wife returned to her family's estate in Niigata.

Although we don't know exactly what Shinran did during those twenty years of pastoring, we know the results of his efforts. Thousands of people from various walks of life throughout eastern Japan finally encountered the Buddha's teachings that had been previously only accessible to the elites in Kyoto. And these people found a new dynamic outlook, seeing the freedom and equality of all lives and understanding how causes and conditions, not divine powers, affect the ongoing changes in the world. Farmers no longer felt like slaves to the overlords and weather conditions and merchants could take on more risks and travel widely. And for the many people touched by Shinran's sharing of the teachings, there was a keen desire to learn more and pass it on to future generations.

Even though the groups hadn't built grand temple buildings, many couples opened their homes to host Dharma gatherings. At the time of Shinran's retreat to Kyoto, there was quite an extensive network of Jodo Shinshu groups. I suspect one reason for Shinran leaving eastern Japan was to escape the politics that inevitably arise when organizations grow. But Shinran, through his letters and works written in vernacular Japanese, kept in close touch with the eastern Japan groups up until his death.

I'm imposing my own views here, but I think Shinran saw himself as continuing the work of his teacher Honen by pastoring the villagers and farmers of eastern Japan. But he also realized how this pastoring work took all of Honen's time. Although Honen was active in the Kyoto area from 1175 when he left the Mt. Hiei monastery to his death in 1212, he hasn't left much of a legacy in writing. What little Honen said and wrote during his pastoring years has been "massaged" by his followers, the current Jodo-shu sect, so as not to upset the powers that be. One glaring example is Shinran's hand-copied version of Honen's work has Honen talking about the equality

(continued in next column)

## Shinran Behind the Scenes

(continued from previous column)

of women but Honen's followers deleted those passages from their official version.

I think Shinran realized with advancing age he better step away from the demands of pastoring and dedicate himself to the careful documentation of what Honen was really talking about, backed up with passages from as much of the Buddhist textual tradition as possible. Shinran needed to be in Kyoto to have access to the sutras and commentaries and fortunately his daughter Kakushin-ni had married well and was willing to look after him in his failing health.

Still, as we reflect on Shinran as our teacher, we should remember he wasn't just a book-learning scholar but spent time "in the field" talking with lay people and dealing with their situations of financial failures, loss of family members and feeling outcast from their communities. I hope for those of you outside of our temple's membership that wherever you are, you appreciate the "behind the scenes" work done by many pastors (ordained and lay) among us who carry on Shinran's work of bringing the Buddha's teachings into our everyday lives.



This statue of Shinran survived the atomic blast in Hiroshima. It now stands outside the New York City Buddhist Church.



## The Nature of Oneness

(continued from page 1)

No loggers, no cut trees, no paper.” What was the point he made? First, nothing exists independent of outside conditions. Second, no single component is more important than another. These two points, along with the ideas of dukkha and impermanence, are the basis of Buddhism.

The legend of the birth of Gautama Buddha says that he took seven steps and cried, “Above the heavens and below the heavens I alone am most noble.” This is “The birth cry of the Buddha.” It is not a statement of superiority. Rather, it is the recognition that all people are unique. We all have a nobility that is not determined by others. Our nobility is ours by birth. It cannot be taken away from us. If all are unique then none are superior or inferior. This individual uniqueness is Oneness.

The nembutsu, Namu Amida Butsu, is an expression of this Oneness. As we bow down to the unbounded light and life in which we exist, we open ourselves to the power beyond self. Realizing that our lives are but a part of the interconnectedness of all things, we move beyond our ego centered self and the suffering it brings. We awaken to the Oneness.

In his book *Everyday Suchness*, Rev. Gyomay Kubose ends his discussion of Oneness with the following, “We have to see and understand things as they are. Each and all are unique and independent and, at the same time, all are interrelated and interdependent. We are all one.”



Check online for more details on any of our activities or ask the listed contacts.

### Collage and Vision Board – Nov. 9, 10 am-noon

The first craft event is going to be a collage-based activity. All supplies provided, but bring anything you want to collage on and enjoy the company of other crafters. Refreshments will be provided.



### Dish and Dharma – Nov. 14, 6-7:15 pm

Let's get together, share a meal and have a casual, free-wheeling conversation about our experiences practicing Buddhism and our relationship to the Dharma. Come as you are and bring a dish.

## Kindness

by Kestrel



This drawing is a symbol of kindness. I feel like it portrays many of the habits we at Dharma School strive for, like being kind to all other beings.

In this picture a girl is feeding a deer. I drew this to show people that we should always be kind to all other beings. I chose a deer because we see people showing kindness to other people every day and it should be this way with all creatures. We should see more people showing compassion to animals and people.

We are planning several craft get-togethers in the coming months. Upcoming events include:

December: Calligraphy  
January: Gelatin 3D Flower Art  
February: Picture Frame Decoration  
Exact dates to be announced.



### Cook it Forward – Donations Solicited

It's that time again. We are collecting baby wipes, deodorant, razors, hand warmers and sweaters. Clothing can be secondhand. These items will be taken to neighborhood encampments. We will also be making fresh organic soups and salads to serve to our unhoused neighbors. To get involved, please contact Candy Minx.

### Spaghetti Night Volunteers

Another Spaghetti Night fundraiser is being planned for spring. We have a steering committee and are looking for other volunteers. Contact Karen Baier, Wendy Fawcett or Candy Minx. [candyminx@hotmail.com](mailto:candyminx@hotmail.com)



# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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## NOVEMBER 2019 CALENDAR

See page 2 for details on specific events. Events may be canceled or moved.  
Check [www.facebook.com/budtempchi](https://www.facebook.com/budtempchi) for the most up-to-date changes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 7 pm Taiko	2
3 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial 5 pm Aikido	4 7 pm Iaido	5 11 am Qi Gong	6 7 pm Introduction to Buddhism	7 7:30 pm Meditation	8 6 pm <b>Bulletin Submissions Deadline</b> 7 pm Taiko	9 10 am Collage
10 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5 pm Aikido	11 7 pm Iaido	12 11 am Qi Gong	13 7 pm Introduction to Buddhism	14 6 pm Dish & Dharma 7:30pm Meditation	15 7 pm Taiko	16 1 pm Asoka Society
17 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service 12:30 pm <b>Board Meeting</b> 5 pm Aikido	18 7 pm Iaido	19 11 am Qi Gong	20 7 pm Introduction to Buddhism	21 7:30 pm Meditation	22 10 am <b>Bulletin Mailing</b> 7 pm Taiko	23 2 pm Ho-on-ko Seminar
24 <b>HO-ON-KO</b> 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5 pm Aikido	25 7 pm Iaido	26 11 am Qi Gong	27	28 <b>THANKSGIVING</b>	29 7 pm Taiko	30