



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

JANUARY 2020

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A NEW BEGINNING

"In each loss there is gain. In each gain, there is loss.
And with each ending, comes **a new beginning.**"

Buddhist Proverb –

"It was a revelation to me when Rev. Ken wrote out the four noble truths and instead of spelling out "Eightfold Path" as the fourth truth, he wrote, "Follow the path of Nembutsu (self-reflection)."

Rev. Patti's - The Noble Path of Nembutsu on Page 2

"All that has gone before brings us to where we are today; the future of BTC is in our hands."

Bill Bohlman's - A Year of Karmic Condition on Page 4

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Bill Bohlman says it best in this article A Year of Karmic Conditions on page 4: "Gratitude filled our hearts for all the hard work done throughout the years so that we could have the temple we enjoy today. All that has gone before brings us to where we are".

It is time for self-reflection, and self-awareness.

It is time for us to LIVE Buddhism, not just wear its label.

Much light to all in 2020!



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Voices of the BTC



THE NOBLE PATH OF NEMBUTSU



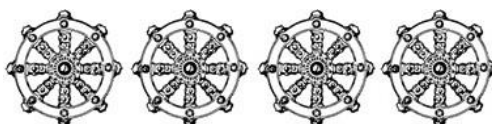
**Rev. Patti
Nakai**

Resident Minister

At the Ho-on-ko Sunday service in November, the guest speaker Rev. Ken Yamada, in his talk to the Dharma School students, told the story he heard from a minister in Japan. The minister visited a bear ranch where visitors can buy biscuits to feed the bears in a fenced-in area. The minister found that no matter where he aimed the biscuits, the bigger, stronger bears would get them. Rev. Yamada said that the smaller bears were those who were very young or very old or maybe disabled and sick. None of them could run fast enough or reach high enough to get any biscuits before the big bears overpowered them. “So only the big, strong bears got the biscuits,” Rev. Yamada said, “Is that fair?” The kids responded, “No!”

Rev. Yamada then went on to explain that Shinran was someone who saw it wasn't fair that some people got all the goodies and others got nothing. For the kids, the equivalent of bear biscuits might be toys or sweet treats or even intangible things like playing games and joking together – the goodies in life that should be shared and not hoarded by those who are bigger and stronger. But what was it that Shinran said we should be sharing?

For so long in Japan (and still in the West), Buddhism was hijacked by the “big bears,” those who felt only people who were physically tough, mentally strong and morally pure were candidates for enlightenment.



Enlightenment was a prize that only marathon meditators could reach for, only those with years of training and highly developed talents. After twenty years as a monk, Shinran felt he was disqualified for enlightenment because of his wayward heart/mind that couldn't be subdued by ascetic practices. But then he encountered Honen, the former monk-scholar who realized the Buddha's teachings were meant for all people, not just the educated, privileged monastics.

And the message in what are called the Pure Land teachings is that everyone is already included on the path to enlightenment. The Buddha in describing the innermost aspiration of the true seeker shows us that enlightenment itself has to be shared with all beings or else it is only a self-centered delusion. You don't have to be a big tough bear – someone dedicated to a sparse monastic life – but anyone of any level of ability with their checkered morality is already participating in the spiritual awakening of the enlightened ones before us, around us and after us.



In the Saturday Ho-on-ko seminar “Pure Land, Here and Now,” it was a revelation to me when Rev. Ken wrote out the four noble truths and instead of spelling out “Eightfold Path” as the fourth truth, he wrote, “Follow the path of Nembutsu (self-reflection).” Ever since I’ve been attending board meetings at the temple, I’ve heard the Eightfold Path used a morality measuring stick – people saying so-and-so is going against “Right Speech” or “Right Action.” It was painful for me in 2018 to hear some people declare to the membership that I wasn’t faithfully following the Eightfold Path as a minister should. But in the fourth noble truth that Rev. Ken wrote on the whiteboard, the Eightfold Path in the Pure Land teachings cannot be anything but a path of self-reflection, a path of contemplating what Buddhahood (nem-but-su) means for me, NOT a way of judging others as morally unfit.

The “rightness” of the eight aspects of the eightfold path must be in relation to the nembutsu, to Namu Amida Butsu. Shinran’s teacher Honen was famous for letting people in all kinds of professions, whether judged by society as legitimate or criminal, know that their work was “Right Livelihood” if they are able to resonate with Namu Amida Butsu in the course of their duties. For example, one of Honen’s devoted students was a known thief, but in hearing Namu Amida Butsu he had to confront his desire for material goods and see the suffering caused to others by his actions.

“Wrong Livelihood” would be any job that never gives you the chance to see your limitations and appreciate what others have done for you. In his talks, Rev. Ken reminded me that the Buddha in the Pure Land texts was clarifying for everyone that all his teachings were about the path of self-reflection and not about becoming a big

bear that can beat out the little bears for Nirvana biscuits. The “Pure Land, Here and Now” is the awakening to the reality of Oneness, the awakening that is already being shared with us in Namu Amida Butsu.

The Dharma Kid's Corner

“I’VE LEARNED THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT KIND OF GENEROSITY IS THE KIND THAT YOU GIVE FROM YOURSELF: YOUR TIME, YOUR EFFORT, AND YOUR LOVE.”

Dharma delivered by **Beatrice**
Representing the kids from the Dharma Group
Bodhi Day Service - Sunday, December 8, 2019





The start of a new year is a time to reflect on the year gone by, and ponder the year to come. In 2019, BTC celebrated our 75th anniversary (Images of event below). Our archive became filled with memories of members, ministers and events that occurred throughout the 75 years. Gratitude filled our hearts for all the hard work done throughout the years so that we could have the temple we enjoy today. **All that has gone before brings us to where we are today; the future of BTC is in our hands.**

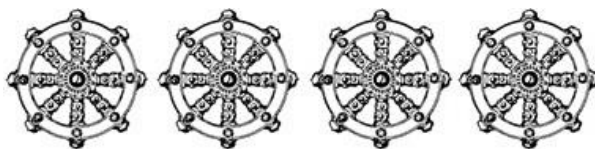
Our Dharma School is thriving with a growing attendance and three age groups. The lay leaders continue to learn the ritual aspects of the service so that they can assist Rev. Patti teach Sunday and fill in when she is away. The board of directors works on the broader issues of the temple - always cognizant that the goal is to ensure that BTC remains a place where anyone can come to hear the teachings. Most importantly, our members, the Sangha, devote their time and energy to helping BTC fulfill this mission. It is because of them that the Bulletin gets mailed, mochitsuki and Natsu Matsuri are always a success, and every Sunday we are ready to greet whoever may attend.

Our past creates our present; our present determines our future. In 2020, as a temple community, and as a nation, we will unfortunately experience the turmoil of a presidential election. Emotions will run high throughout society as people express their feelings. As a temple, I feel it is important that we stay above the fray. We all have our own opinions, but we must always be aware that those with whom we disagree have a basis for their belief. It is a result of their karmic condition. Although we now exist in the same moment, each of us has our own infinite past that shapes our perception of now. As such, we must respect the other's reality although we may disagree with it. From the Dhammapada selection Choices, *"Hatred is not overcome by hostility: regardless, hatred is stilled thru non-hostility. This is a timeless rule."* How often have we said these words, how often have we not heeded them?

The strength of BTC is the growing diversity of the membership. As such, it is important to remember that each person has their own path; the one that brought them here and the one on which they are trying to go. Together, as a community, let us strive for a deeper understanding of ourselves and others.

Our joy, is ours to determine.

Namu Amida Butsu.



Bill Bohlman
BTC President

budtempchi@aol.com
Find him most Sundays
after service at the
information desk &
bookstore.



TEMPLE NEWS NOVEMBER 2019

- **11/03** Monthly memorial service. *** Chanting practice. *** BTC Kokyo Taiko.
- Performed at Berrien County Juvenile Detention Center in Berrien Springs, Michigan.
- **11/06** Visit from philosophy class at North Park University.
- **11/09** Craft class met.
- **11/10** Dharma School service. *** Chanting practice.
- **11/14** "Dish and Dharma" dinner discussion.
- **11/16-17** Rev. Nakai at the New York Buddhist Church giving Saturday seminar and speaking at the Sunday service.
- **11/17** Lay speaker Sunday with speaker Nancey Epperson.
- **11/21** Bon Odori exercise class.
- **11/22** December bulletin mailed.
- **11/23** Ho-on-ko seminar.
- **11/24** Ho-on-ko and Dharma School service. *** Board of Directors met.
- **11/26** Movie "D.T. Suzuki, A Zen Life" shown at 1pm and 7pm.
- **11/30** Rev. Nakai conducted memorial service for Natsue Ann Taketoshi at Lakeview Funeral Home. She is survived by daughters Joyce Yamauchi, Amy Chikaraishi and Robin Celano.

UP AND COMING EVENTS

- **Bulletin Submission Deadline – Monday, January 6**
- **Matinee – Tuesday, January 14, 1PM**
"Compassion and Wisdom"
A documentary directed by independent filmmaker James Zito about the ideals of the Bodhisattva from classic texts and its relevance to social and environmental justice.
- **Calligraphy Instruction – Saturday, January 18, 10am**
Please bring your own supplies.
No charge however, donations are welcome.
RSVP to: bulletin.btc@gmail.com
- **Asoka Society – Saturday, January 25: 1pm**
- **General Meeting – Sunday, January 26, 1 pm.**



THANK YOU!

"Understanding the Nembutsu through recognizing the Paramitas in others"

Send in your recognitions at bulletin.btc@gmail.com

Service & Hospitality

- **Sunday Service Participants:** Tim Balderman, Bill Bohlman, Antoinette D'Vencets, Nancey Epperson, Alice Murata, Diana Schoendorff, Miriam Solon, Jasmine.
- **Lay Leaders:** Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Wendy Fawcett, Mary Harvey, Gary Nakai, Miriam Solon.
- **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga.
- **Audio Controls:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai.
- **Bulletin Mailing:** Dennis Chan, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Sadae Kasamoto, April Kellman, Ruby Tsuji.
- **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Belonis Family, Noreen Enkoji, Nancey Epperson, Anna Idol, Haru Ito, Mona Kambol, Gwen Kato, Alice Murata, Arlene Nozawa, Kiyo Omachi, Iaido.

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, Glenn Fujiura
- **Sweeping, mopping, vacuuming:** Mary Harvey, Michael Yasukawa
- **Restocking paper towels and toilet paper:** Miriam Solon
- **Watering plants, laundering kitchen towels and aprons:** Ruth Abbinanti, Alice Murata
- **Cleaning minister's residence:** Miriam Solon
- **Administrative Office Volunteers:** April Kellman, Candy Minx
- **Maintaining and updating Temple website:** Wendy Fawcett, Glenn Fujiura
- **Maintaining and updating Temple computer:** Gary T. Nakai
- **Setting up and taking down chairs and tables:** Too many to thank—thanks to all!



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.

FACES OF THE BTC



Images of Our 75th Anniversary



AFFILIATED GROUPS

Aikido - djaikibudo@gmail.com

Asoka Society - 3rd Saturday: 1pm

Iaido - Jerry Morishige

Qi-Gong - Dennis Chan 312-771-6087

Taiko - kokyوتاiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org



BTC BULLETIN

February's Bulletin Topic: Nirvana Day and Pet Memorial. Article submissions by January 6, 2020, please.

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 bulletin.btc@gmail.com



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JANUARY 2020 CALENDAR

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 11 am New Year's Day service	2	3 7 pm Taiko	4
5 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial 5 pm Aikido	6 7 pm Iaido Bulletin submission deadline	7 11 am Qi Gong	8	9 7:30pm Meditation	10 7 pm Taiko	11
12 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5pm Aikido	13 7 pm Iaido	14 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Movie Night "Compassion and Wisdom"	15	16 7:30pm Meditation	17 7 pm Taiko	18 10:00am Calligraphy Instruction
19 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service 12:30 pm Board Meeting 5 pm Aikido	20 7 pm Iaido	21 11 am Qi Gong	22	23 7:30pm Meditation	24 10 am Bulletin Mailing 7 pm Taiko	25
26 9 am Meditation 11 am Eitai-kyo Service / Dharma School 1 pm General Meeting 5 pm Aikido	27 7 pm Iaido	28 11 am Qi Gong	29	30 7:30pm Meditation	31	