



## The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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# April 2024



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## Things Are Looking Up This April

By Rev. Frederick Brenion

Hopefully you will get to read this before the promised Total Eclipse of the Sun on April 8. It will be a once-in-a-lifetime moment. I've only seen partial solar eclipses, and those were awesome, but this will be much more. I hope there will be good weather for this. There have been many astronomical events I've missed that were called because of rain or even light cloud-cover.

I've always been mindful of what's in the sky. I was five in 1957 when my father took us out front of our home in Santa Monica, CA. It was dusk. It was also eerily weird in that everyone on our block was out on their front lawns looking up. My father picked me up and pointed to a spot in the darkening sky and there was this moving bright dot. It was Sputnik. The first orbiting satellite, launched by the Soviet Union as an announcement to the world that they were first in space. It was designed to be seen, bright and shiny. I was there for the start of the Space Age! Soon there would be the Moon race. I remember watching all those rockets, Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo, till finally I watched the first human set foot on another world, our Moon. So, yes, Astronomy excites me, and eclipses are really spectacular! I hope you all will be able to see it! But see it safely! Don't look at the Sun directly, even just a visible sliver can damage your eyes. Rather create a pin-hole camera, easy to make, or use a colander for the Sun to shine through and you can watch the image on the ground. Done that too! Perhaps your local museums or planetarium will have a solar viewing party where you can celebrate this together and catch projected images as the eclipse is in operation.

What will also be amazing is to see the stars begin to appear in the sky in the middle of the day. Flowers will begin to droop. Birds may nest as they react to what appears to be nighttime.

What has this to do with Buddhism? Perhaps nothing. Perhaps everything. At the heart of our teachings is Causes, Conditions, and Effects. That Law and Order govern the processes of the world around us. Even in ancient days, places like Stonehenge were created to calculate the seasons, eclipses, and movements in the sky. We needed to know these things to plan ahead for planting or harvest, and special events that would otherwise frighten us. Solar eclipses were scary. Many ancients thought that a dragon was swallowing the Sun! So knowledge on what was going to happen was important. It's only been 400 years since Kepler and Newton discovered the laws of planetary motion and celestial mechanics. We've been able to calculate centuries ahead when these sky events would happen. Laws that would allow us to travel in space and send robotics to other worlds.

Buddha discovered that the laws of Causes, Conditions, and Effects, operate within our lives as well. If we do good we develop a tendency towards the good. If we do bad, we develop a tendency towards the bad.

The Buddha summed it up well in *the Dhammapada*: "In this world hate never yet dispels hate. This is the law, ancient and inexhaustible." In our own time Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

So as you gaze towards the skies, think of the laws without that governs the movements of the cosmos. And take time also to gaze within to the laws of karma that governs our hearts and minds. If we live according to the Dharma we live according to what is most real in this our cosmic home.

Namu Amida Butsu.



### **Scheduled activities – subject to change**

**Weekly services** – Sundays 11am - in-person and on FB Live

**Children's Dharma School** – second & fourth Sunday of the month April 14 & 28

**Sunday Meditation** - 9am – in-person only

**Thursday Meditation** 7:15pm – in-person and on FB Live

**Asoka Society (social gathering)** –3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. 1pm/April 20

The above activities are open to the public and free (donations appreciated).

If you are interested in the two activities below, please leave your contact information and the group will set up an appointment for you to visit them.

**Laido (martial art)** – Mondays 7:00pm

**Kokyo Taiko (drums)** – Friday evenings 7:00 pm, Sunday afternoons – early afternoon

**Please confirm time @kokyوتاiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org**

### **Mind Onlyness by Bill Bohlman, Temple President**

An article by Dr. Nobuo Haneda, of the Maida Center of Buddhism, discusses the idea of Mind Onlyness. Usually, we think of the world as being made up of two types of reality. Subjective reality is the world as we see it. Objective reality is a world based on facts. However, Buddhism teaches that there is no objective reality. The world is one of Mind Onlyness, facts as we interpret them. Dr. Haneda uses the following parable as an example.

Long ago in Japan lived a country couple. Their life was a primitive one. Neither of them had ever been to the city. Therefore, one day when the husband went to the city everything he saw was new to him. Coming upon a mirror shop, it was the first time he had seen such an item. What he saw amazed him. There was his late father looking back at him! How wonderful to see his father again. He purchased the mirror and took it home.

The mirror was precious to him so he put it in a special room. He told no one about this mirror, not even his wife. Every day he would go into the room to visit his father and feel great joy. Not knowing what was in the room, his wife began to become suspicious. Why was her husband spending so much time in that room? One day, while he was away, she sneaked into the room. Looking into the mirror she was shocked to see a woman's face. This was why he spent so much time here; he had brought a mistress back from the city! Upon her husband's return she shouted, "You are cheating on me. You brought a mistress from the city." A tremendous argument ensued.

At that moment, a Buddhist nun stopped by to visit. After listening to both of their stories, the nun was perplexed and asked to see this object. Looking into the mirror she saw a woman with a shaved head wearing robes. Turning to the couple, she announced happily, "Look, the woman has decided to become a nun."

One mirror, three people, three different realities. The man saw in his reflection the face of his father and experienced joy. The wife, being suspicious, saw her reflection and decided it was her husband's mistress. The nun, seeking a way to resolve the conflict, saw in her reflection a woman who had chosen a life of celibacy.

The world around us is our mirror. When we are happy, laughter seems to fill our life. When we are sad, it is a world of tears. Angry, conflict seems to surround us. Our human nature tells us that we must correct the negatives we see in order to become happy. The Buddha taught that this approach is futile. The cause of our suffering is not outside us. The suffering comes from how we view the world. The choice of reflection is yours.

### **DEEPEST SYMPATHY**

To the family and friends of:

Haru Ito

February 24, 2024

Yusuke Arakaki

November 12, 2023

## Yoneo at 100

by Nancey Epperson

On March 3, longtime BTC member Yoneo Shimomura celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday surrounded by friends and family at his “senior lifestyle” residence. As Yoneo is not well known by many members, I asked his son Gary Shimomura to write a few words about his father’s history with BTC. Below are his remarks.

Yoneo Shimomura and Mary were married by Reverend Kubose at the Chicago Buddhist Church in Hyde Park in 1951. When the church moved to Uptown they started taking my sister, Naomi and me to services.

In 1961 when I turned 8 I joined the Cub Scout Pack 3515 at BTC. My father Yoneo volunteered to be the Cubmaster and served for around 3 years. While we were in high school BTC started the JB’s (Junior Busseis) and Yoneo and Mary were one of the many adult advisors. Many of our friends from those JB’s came to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Reverend Saito was originally from Kagoshima, Japan as was Yoneo’s father. This may be the reason why the Saito’s were close family friends and they shared many holiday dinners with our family.

Here are some photos taken at the celebration.



Yoneo, daughter Naomi, grandson, great-granddaughter.

Gary, Yoneo, grandson Tyler, great-grandson



Extended Shimomura family



Gary Nakai and Rev. Patti congratulate Yoneo.

Daughter Naomi, with friends from the JB’s, Debbie, Susan, and Lynn join the celebration.





## The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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### April 2024 Calendar

Events may be canceled or moved:  
Check [www.facebook.com/budtempchi](https://www.facebook.com/budtempchi)  
for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Meditation 7:15pm	5 Taiko* 7pm	6
7 9:00am Meditation 11am Monthly Memorial	8 laido* 7:00pm	9	10	11 Meditation 7:15pm	12 Taiko* 7pm	13
14 9:00am Meditation 11am Dharma School / Hanamatsuri	15 laido* 7:00pm	16	17	18 Meditation 7:15pm	19 Taiko* 7pm	20 Asoka 1pm
21 9:00am Meditation 11am Regular Service	22 laido* 7:00pm	23	24	25 Meditation 7:15pm	26 Taiko* 7pm	27
28 9:00am Meditation 11am Dharma School Service	29 laido* 7:00pm	30				

\*laido and Taiko require appointments made in advance