



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

February 2026

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Feet, walking in peace

Rev. Fred Brenion

So much trauma has been generated in our country and throughout the world. So much hatred and anger is being enacted. The natural reaction is to respond in kind. It is an ongoing assault on one's mind and senses to look at the news. I have to remind myself over and over of the words of our Buddha, "Hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is healed." Then Buddha adds, "This is an ancient and eternal law." That is a remarkable addition. Buddha is saying that he is not making this up about hate, but that this was always been the only way to truly deal with it, by love. We just recently commemorated Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, and he repeated the same teaching, "Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." This wisdom is repeated again and again, but constant news makes it very hard to hear.

Yet even in the news a glimmer of that light has been appearing, and is appearing daily. Coming out of the blue and yet arriving, I hope in time. You may have seen snippets of this, a small group of Vietnamese Buddhist monks, simply walking just for peace. That's it. They're just walking. As monks there is really not much they can do about the world, but they can do that little bit. They decided they're going to walk from their monastery in Fort Worth, Texas to Washington, DC. They're going to walk about 2300 miles in about 110 days. By the time you read this they should be in Virginia.

Why are they walking? Because their Buddhism tells them to live in peace and to be in peace. In case any of us are wondering, that's our Buddhism too. When they stop they talk about peace. They smile at everyone. They listen. They're mindful of what they do. It's been hard doing this. Two of their people were hurt in a car accident. One of the monks has had to have a leg amputated. That monk now comes by vehicle and meets up with his brothers. They also have a stray dog they adopted – or perhaps the dog adopted them! His name is Aloka. He is greatly loved and he shows love.

They receive food donations, as Buddhist monks have always done. They sleep, I'm told, in tents. They walk in heat, rain, sleet, and snow. I've been watching their footwear. They're walking now in boots because of the snow!

So what is their goal? Simply to raise "awareness of peace, loving kindness, and compassion across America and the world." They're not protesting. They're simply sharing a "gentle manner" of walking meditation to bring about a more peaceful meditation. They speak at local communities enroute about peace. They're doing what Buddha did. They're perhaps showing us what we can do too.

What really amazes me in watching the film clips is that people are gathering by the roads simply to see these monks. They offer them gifts of flowers and food. They smile and the monks smile right back,...and they keep walking. And I see hope and love in the eyes of the people. They are grateful to see what we all could be in the simple steps of these monks.

I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like this.

Got to say that I can't wait to see what happens when they reach Washington. Will they stop at the Lincoln memorial or the MLK memorial? Will they go through Arlington? I'm fearful about the White House or the Congress. Those two institutions need to hear these monks and their message. I fear that some will try to use the monks for their own agendas. But that's the world for us. I'm guessing these gentle monks will just smile back and wish them peace, and that's Buddhism for us as well. They're living out *metta* – loving kindness, showing us all the way. It doesn't have to be by walking. Just each of us doing what we can in our own way. Just be peace for others, and especially be peace for yourself as well.

I do hope all of you will watch for these monks. I've been seeing many reels on Facebook. I'm certain there are other venues too.

This is ongoing news I long to see more often.

2026 General Membership Meeting
Bill Bohlman, Temple President

The 2026 General Membership meeting occurred on Sunday, January 25. There were 16 individuals present in person and 9 individuals on line via Zoom. The agenda was similar to previous years.

The first order of business was approval of last year's minutes; approved as submitted. The next order of business was the President's report. Bill Bohlman said that 2025 had been a busy year. He thanked the people who come every Sunday and make it possible to have service. Bill mentioned that Natsu Matsuri once again was successful. He expressed his hope that in 2026 more people would come to Sunday service.

Glenn Fujiura gave the treasurer's report. We had a good year with a \$27,000 surplus. We received generous donations from some long-time temple families. However, with a changing Sangha we cannot count on this continuing. The 2026 budget has only minor changes from 2025 with a surplus expected once again. Expenses are stable or declining with the exception of insurance costs. The budget was approved by all with one abstain.

Bill Bohlman gave the VP Religious Affairs report. We had lots of student visitors in 2025. Rev. Fred worked with students and groups online. Carlos Mesa and Albert Gonzalez continue to lead the mediation groups. Our books to prisoner program is ongoing. Rev. Patti also works with prison groups. Bill thanked Rev. Fred for being there every Sunday.

Ed Horiuchi presented a membership report. In 2025 there were 87 paid memberships. This is a slight decline from 2024. The Dharma Fund had a total of 26 donors.

Adam Kellmen gave the VP Temple Relations report. Adam attended various cultural events during 2025. He thanked the volunteers at Natsu matsuri, Obon and Mochitsuki. Adam maintains the temple Facebook page and website.

Gary Nakai gave a summary of the renovation of the residence building. We will remediate the water damage and renovate two apartments to be comfortably usable. Work will start soon. Total cost estimated to be approximately \$300,000. During the year, Gary led the upgrade of hondo lighting.

The Asoka report was submitted online. They continue to meet every month, however, the membership is declining. They continue to help at Hanamatsuri, Natsu Matsuri and mochitsuki.

Yasuo Ito reported for laido. They are founding members of Simizu Sesei's new dojo. Yasuo and others went to Japan for ranking tests. Yasuo also received an award from JASC. Iaido performed at Natsu matsuri. They currently have 13 members.

Miriam Solon reported that taiko had 4 performances in 2025. They donated \$1, 000 to BTC for the building renovation. Currently have 11 members and are open to new members.

There is an update to the ministerial situation. Rev. Victor is pursuing further study and will not be available to come to BTC as resident minister until fall of 2027. In addition, we no longer anticipate a minister coming for Kaikyoshi training. Glenn pointed out that the budget surplus is largely due to the current lack of salary and benefits for a full-time resident minister. A new minister will require new sources of income. Gary pointed out that we will restructure future budgets to replace the funds spent on the building renovation.

Stan Oda closed the meeting by thanking those who donated to buying the television to replace the one that was used for Sunday service.

Please contact me if you have further questions about the meeting.

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Scheduled Activities – subject to change

Weekly services – Sundays 11 am - in-person, Facebook Live

Qigong (Chinese exercise) – Tuesdays, 10:30 am

Sunday Meditation – 9 am

Thursday Meditation – 7:15 pm

Asoka Society (social gathering) – Feb 7 – 2 PM Yu Miri seminar

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

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

Iaido (martial art) – Mondays, 7 pm

Kokyo Taiko (drums) – Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons



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February 2026 Calendar

Events may be canceled or moved:

Check www.facebook.com/budtempchi for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 11 am Monthly Memorial 9 am Meditation	2 laido 7 pm	3 Qigong 10:30 am	4	5 Meditation 7:15 pm	6	7
8 11 am Regular Service 9 am Meditation	9 laido 7 pm	10 Qigong 10:30 am	11	12 Meditation 7:15 pm	13	14
15 11 am Nirvana Day 9 am Meditation	16 laido* 7 pm	17 Qigong 10:30 am	18	19 Meditation 7:15 pm	20	21
22 11 am Pet Memorial 9 am Meditation	23 laido* 7 pm	24 Qigong 10:30 am	25	26 Meditation 7:15 -pm	27	28