The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

March 2026

IN THIS ISSUE

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Mulling it over with our Rev. Gyomay Kubose
Rev. Fred Brenion

Sometimes I need to stop and listen to our great teachers. Teachers like Shinran, Rennyo, Kiyozawa, Akegarasu, Soga, and our own Rev. Gyomay Kubose. His Memorial Day is coming up this March so we all could do well to hear his words in our hearts and mind.

I found this quote of his:

"Concepts are not real things; a conceptualized world is a dead world.
Living actualities lose their life when put into concepts."

That is a very good quote. It speaks to me because I deal with concepts a great deal. I dealt with concepts in my work as a librarian, and now as a Buddhist minister. There are deep concepts in Buddhism and in our own Jodo Shinshu. But we are reminded over and over to remember that 'Concepts are not real things." We confuse this over and over. The greatest concept for me to deal with is me! What I call the 'unholy Trinity' of 'Me', 'Myself', and "I". I put too much credence into these when is in fact a construct, even more a fantasy. Buddha shows us over and over the need to undo our inner concepts that we think are the real deal. The Four-fold Noble Truths focus with tremendous accuracy on what is really the source of my own difficulties, my craving to maintain 'myself'. On top of this I let my concepts about others to dominate and keep me from really knowing the person I'm dealing with, talking to, sharing life . But I'm not really sharing life, I'm sharing a mental photo, not the real person. There is a phrase, 'Don't confuse the map with the territory." Concepts are useful, but they're just a tool. At times they must be let go so you can see the reality that is all around you, waiting for you, the real you.

That's why Rev. Kuose is on target when he reminds us, that all of us are 'Living actualities', but we can lose the experience of real life by relying on labeling and conceptualizing each other. For myself, I need to be more attentive to this matter.

Use the Temple
Bill Bohlman, Temple President

In this issue is an article by Alice Murata about an Asoka sponsored event with author/playwright Yu Miri. This event is a great example of how the temple can be used. Historically, BTC had many groups and events occurring on an ongoing basis. However, in more recent years this number has dwindled. What can we do to reverse this trend?

Currently there are a few ongoing usages other than Sunday service. We have Sunday morning and Thursday evening meditation groups. On Tuesday mornings the Qigong group meets. Iaido is here Monday evening and Taiko meets most Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Each month on the third Saturday Asoka meets in the afternoon. All of these activities are open to anyone who wishes to participate.

Of course, we also have our special events such as Natsu Matsuri, Obon Odori and mochitsuki. At these times the temple is vibrant and alive; a true sense of Sangha is evident. How can we create more events like these and the Asoka event? The answer is up to you.

This is your temple, use it. If you have a special interest that you feel others would also be interested let us know. Either a one-time event, or something ongoing, we can work to fit the schedule. If there are speakers you feel the members would find interesting and informative let us know so we can reach out to them. However, ideas are only the beginning; your help in planning and implementing the idea is also needed.

We have a beautiful and functional building; let's put it to greater use. The temple is more than just a place to hear the Dharma. It is a place to live the Dharma through the Sangha. It's your temple, use it.

Welcome, Yu Miri!

Alice Murada

The Asoka Society sponsored *Restaging a Japanese American Chicago: A Conversation with Yu Miri* at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago on February 7, 2026. We enthusiastically welcomed Yu Miri to Chicago and the Japanese American community. About 80 guests were in attendance including Deputy Consul General Naoya Kishi and leaders of several Japanese-American organizations.

Yu Miri, widely acclaimed novelist and playwright from Japan began her residency last December as a Visiting Research Associate in East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. She and her project co-organizer, Michael Bourdaghs, Robert S. Ingersoll Distinguished Service Professor in East Asian Languages and Civilizations explained their proposed project. A video of the project introducing Yu's work in Japan with residents in areas affected by the 3/11 tsunami and Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 was shown. This program culminated into the theatrical production. Yu Miri answered many audience questions clarifying her proposed plans. The response to her was excellent with many audience members offering to assist her.

The plan is for Yu to conduct 50 pairs of Chicago Japanese American interviews in the English or Japanese language. By September she would like to complete a stage reading and by the following year a new theatrical play. For more project information look up https://ceas.uchicago.edu/re-staging-japanese-american-chicago. To volunteer please contact Michael Bourdaghs at mbourdaghs@uchicago.edu. Please support this project and help in any ways you can.

Special thanks for the many people who made this program possible:

Mary Doi and Michael Bourdaghs for program details

Bill Bohlman, Buddhist Temple for Chicago President

Stan Oda and Jason Matsumoto for technical support

Carlos Meza (leader) , Eric Kato, Mitchell Kato, and Adam Kellman for setup and clean up.

Arlene Nozawa and Janice Omachi for handling the registration desk

Gwen Kato (leader)

Refreshments: Mary Ozaki, Jane Morishige, April Kellman, Miriam Solon, Mary Doi,

Mike Bourdaghs, Arlene Nozawa, Jan Omachi, Noreen Enkoji, Alice Murata

My apologies if any were not acknowledged.

Janice Omachi & Arlene Nozawa

Carlos Meza, Alice Murata, Yu Mira, Michael Bourdagahs

Photo Credit - Janice Omachi

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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) – March 21 – 1 PM
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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March 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** Iaido 7 pm	**3** Qigong 10:30 am	**4**	**5** Meditation 7:15 pm	**6**	**7**
8 11 am Regular Service 9 am Meditation	**9** Iaido 7 pm	**10** Qigong 10:30 am	**11**	**12** Meditation 7:15 pm	**13**	**14**
15 11 am Regular Service 9 am Meditation	**16** Iaido* 7 pm	**17** Qigong 10:30 am	**18**	**19** Meditation 7:15 pm	**20**	**21** 1 pm Asoka
22 11 am Spring O-Higan 9 am Meditation	**23** Iaido* 7 pm	**24** Qigong 10:30 am	**25**	**26** Meditation 7:15 -pm	**27**	**28**
29 11 am Founders Day Service	**30** Iaido	**31** Qigong 10:30 am				