



Fellow Travelers

The monthly newsletter of the Longmont Buddhist Temple

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LONGMONT BUDDHIST TEMPLE NORTHWEST CORNER - PIKE ROAD AND MAIN STREET, (606 PIKE ROAD), LONGMONT, COLORADO 80501
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Message from Sensei John

Fear

by Sensei John Hughes
Minister's Assistant

Dharmavidya David Brazier, the president of the International Zen Therapy Institute and the head of the Amida Order, a Pure Land sangha, wrote an article entitled "The Gift of Fear" in the current [Fall 2017] issue of Tricycle magazine. It is strange to think of fear as a gift. Our natural reaction to fear is to bury it or to run from it. Occasionally, when we are strong, we try to overcome it, but mostly we attempt to disavow fear or act as if it has no power over us. Brazier Sensei takes a different approach to dealing with fear. Before he discusses the non-traditional approach, he begins with what he calls the "heroic path." This is a traditional Buddhist methodology for dealing with limitations. The heroic path is a path of self-power in which the practitioner tries to conquer shortcomings, or at least perceived shortcomings, by extinguishing them through personal effort. The shortcoming that is to be surmounted in this case is fear.

In Jodo Shinshu, this approach is frequently called the "path of sages." On the heroic path, one relies on one's own ability or power to overcome defects. This approach is a difficult path to enlightenment as most of us aren't capable of defeating our base desires through our own effort. Brazier, too, finds that this approach does not work and recommends a different way.

Brazier recommendation, which is similar to the Jodo Shinshu approach, is to accept that we are foolish beings in this world of samsara. Once that is accepted we can adopt what he calls a pragmatic approach. "Here, we start from the way we actually find ourselves to be – fallible, vulnerable, and mortal. The Japanese Pure Land schools call this our bonbu* nature. On the pragmatic path, the foundation is not striving to better ourselves; rather, the basis is naturalness and honesty about our very imperfect selves." Once we recognize we are imperfect beings in a world of suffering, we can surrender to the fear. Surrendering to fear, accepting it and refusing to allow the fear to control us is the means to overcoming it.

This path closely aligns with Shinran's approach when, after twenty years in the monastery, he despaired in ever

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becoming enlightened through his own effort. Shinran left the monastery. Upon finding the Nembutsu teaching through Honen Shonin he took refuge in Amida Buddha, the Buddha of infinite life and light.

Secondly, by accepting the existence of fear and the fact that we cannot overcome it through our own effort Brazier comes to the calm acceptance that life is difficult and fear is a real part of living in this world. We have the choice of embracing fear and doing our best in each moment to spread compassion to those who need it the most or becoming frozen by it. Humbly without arrogance we realize that we are hopeless through our own effort.

The next step is to accept that Amida Buddha has given us haven through the power of the vows. Accepting this gift, we embrace whatever fear we face as a lesson to use to help others. By understanding that each of us has fears to overcome, we accept the ocean of compassion provided by the Buddha. We then live our lives spreading the compassion to others.

In the Letters of Shinran, the following text explains Shinran's idea of entrusting in the power of Amida:

Formerly you were drunk with the wine of ignorance and had a taste only of the three

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continued from page 1

poisons of greed, anger, and folly, but since you have begun to hear the Buddha's Vow you have gradually awakened from the drunkenness of ignorance, gradually rejected the three poisons, and come to prefer at all times the medicine of Amida Buddha.

We can become frozen in fear. That leads to bad decisions and misery. We can fight fear attempting to defeat it through our own power. Or we can accept that fear is part of life in this world. We move into action with this knowledge, accepting the wisdom compassion of Amida and overcome fear by doing all that we can to spread compassion to all beings. The way with the most chance of success is compassionate action. Think about it. When you are acting to help others, your fears and problems diminish.

May we all take refuge in Amida Buddha and live this life as well as possible.

In Gassho,
John

**The term bonbu literally means 'ordinary beings' still remaining ignorant or unenlightened in contrast to the awakened or enlightened such as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. In Shin Buddhist religious philosophy, we remain bonbu until we attain birth in the Pure Land. Awakening to the fact we are bonbu is a crucial part of the Shin Buddhist faith-experience or religious awakening, as it occurs simultaneously with our awakening to the unconditional love and compassion of Amida Buddha, who saves all beings without any discrimination whatsoever. Thus, it is through entrusting ourselves to this Original Vow of Amida Buddha that we, bonbu, attain birth in the Pure Land and then Enlightenment.*

Source: Vista Buddhist Temple, California <http://vbtemple.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Buddhist-Terms.pdf>

Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) (Founding Day)

The Reverend Shuei Sonoda and the Reverend Kakuryo Nishijima, dispatched by the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan to minister to the Buddhists in America, arrived in San Francisco, California on September 1, 1899. This day marks the official introduction of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism into the mainland United States.

Thus, September 1 has been designated as BCA Founding Day by the Buddhist Churches of America.

The essence of BCA Founding Day lies in the expressing of gratitude for being able to listen to the Buddha-Dharma, especially the Jodo Shinshu teaching, in the United States.

In affirming our Faith in the Nembutsu, it is hoped that all of us will be able to realize the Oneness of life. This is especially true in regard to the fact that the Temple, which we are able to attend, was made possible through the untiring efforts of our great-grandparents and grandparents under the guidance given by our ministers in the early stages of the development of the BCA. If they did not believe deeply in the Jodo Shinshu teaching, the BCA probably would not be in existence today.

Thus, with a sense of sincere appreciation and gratitude, we observe BCA Founding Day in September each year and may the guiding light of Amida Buddha continue to shine upon us to show us the Way of the Nembutsu.

News Around Longmont Buddhist Temple

Past and Present Activities for the Temple

by Lisa Halbert
Temple Board Vice President

The kids are back in school, the nights and early mornings are getting cooler, summer is performing its closing act for the year, and fall is on its way! Our O-Higan/Fall Equinox service this month will provide a good opportunity to honor this transition and to reflect on how we live the eightfold path.

On August 12, the Bissell family held a touching Celebration of Life for Harriet. We were treated to food, music, and a beautiful slide show. The many friends who came shared their memories of Harriet and reconnected with each other. We will always remember Harriet as a consistent and stabilizing force for our sangha. We are grateful to have in our presence Willy, Cathy, and Christina to carry the memories of Harriet forward.

On the evening of August 12, we held our annual mini-golf tournament. Thank you to everyone who supported this event and made it a very fun time!

On August 13, Sensei John completed his series of mindfulness classes based on the book, *Loving-Kindness*, by Sharon Salzberg. This passage from the book summarizes the class discussion for that day: "The Buddha...taught a systematic, integrated path that moves the heart out of isolating contraction into true connection. That path is still with us as a living tradition of meditation practices that cultivate love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. These four qualities are among the most beautiful and powerful states of consciousness we can experience." I believe that when we do our best to incorporate the daily practice of the eightfold path, these four qualities become our natural state of being.

Sadly, we must say farewell to two of our members who are moving out of town soon: Kelli and Kat. When

you see them, please thank them for their dana to our sangha. Kat created a draft of a newcomers packet and questionnaire that we will use in the near future. Kat also made and donated the beautiful covers for the fold-out booklets of chants, which are on sale at our bookstore. Thank you, Kelli and Kat, for the gifts of your talents and your presence. We will miss you.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the events we have coming up:

September 3: Board meeting at 9:00 a.m.

September 10: Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes.

September 16 (Saturday): Seminar by retired minister Ron Nakasone from California. Rev. Nakasone will discuss Shakyamuni Buddha, Mahayana Buddhism, and Jodo Shinshu. He will also provide a lecture and demonstration on the art of sho (calligraphy). Lunch will be provided, and there is no set cost for this seminar; we will gratefully accept your donations. Please join us and invite all your friends! RSVP to Jackie by September 10 (email board@longmontbuddhism.org , or call or text 303.517.4622).

September 17: O-Higan/Fall Equinox family service, led by Rev. Nakasone.

Note: Reverend Nakasone appears courtesy of Rose Takamoto's generosity. Please take a moment to thank Rose by email: gtrt1300@gmail.com

September 24: Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes.

We are taking steps to grow our membership. As you talk with your friends and meet new people when you're out and about, please invite them to a service or mindfulness class. You can also direct them to our website: longmontbuddhism.org.

Comprehending karma is really taking spiritual and moral responsibility for ourselves. – Sharon Salzberg

Buddhist Churches of America

Responds to Recent National Events

Our Response to Hurricane Harvey

On Friday, August 25, a tropical storm which developed into Hurricane Harvey struck the state of Texas, creating major flooding devastation in Houston and threatening to inundate neighboring states, including Louisiana. The tragic loss of life, massive damage to infrastructure, and the destruction of the livelihoods of countless people is tremendous. This may become the worst flood disaster in U.S. history. Our hearts and thoughts go out to everyone who is suffering as a result of this catastrophic natural disaster.

Let us respond to the call for help from the survivors in every way we can. Let us also be aware that tragedies and natural disasters happen repeatedly, all over the world. We are part of the world community and we should remember that our Jodo Shinshu temples and churches must be mindful of people in all areas. I want to encourage you to support these relief efforts and to engage in social welfare efforts in your local community as well, wherever that may be

In Gassho (with palms together),
Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

Statement on the Killing in Charlottesville, Virginia

On August 12, 2017 at a white supremacist rally, a neo-Nazi drove a car into the people protesting his ideology. He killed a woman and injured 19 other people. It was very deplorable and sad to see this incident in Charlottesville, Virginia. I would like to express my deepest sympathies and condolences to the victims' families and friends.

The action that we witnessed was caused by anger and hatred deriving from a sad American historical background. We, as American citizens and residents, are experiencing the heavy karmic effects of our past history. We should be reminded of the American doctrine that all people are equal, as we often hear. We should turn to the core values of each individual's religion or faith to find the way to live harmoniously.

No matter what path we walk, we know that we should not get angry or hate others. We know that we want to love everyone. And at a time like this, we all ask why this happened and how we can stop this type of human behavior.

We, as Buddhists, come to hear the urging voices coming from our teachers in the midst of this world of suffering - this world of samsara. The Buddha is standing with us with tears in his eyes, urging all of us to turn to the Infinite Compassion and Wisdom in order to transcend love and hate. Transcending love and hate does not mean that we eliminate our feelings of love and hate. It means that we recognize and understand that these powerful emotions exist within each of us; they are part of our human condition. We seek to encounter people who feel deep sorrow for our human condition and aspire to attain something worthier.

When we are touched and moved by the Vow of the Buddha to save all beings from suffering with Infinite Wisdom and Compassion directed at us to find the True and Real World beyond our foolish thoughts, we begin to live our lives with humility, understanding, and concern for one another.

Ultimately, we are all within the World of Oneness. Let us start with each individual to help create a better community by hearing the Compassionate Call from the World of True Equality.

Namo Amida Butsu,
Rev. Kodo Umezu
Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

Ignorance and blind passions abound,
Pervading everywhere like innumerable particles of dust.
Love and hatred arising out of accord and conflict
Are like high peaks and mountain ridges.

(Collected Works of Shinran, p. 400)

When we reflect on the establishment of the Vow,
We find that the Tathagata, without abandoning sentient beings
in pain and affliction,
Has taken the directing of virtue to them as foremost,
Thus fulfilling the mind of great compassion. (CWS, p.408)

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Guest Speaker - September 16-17

Please take the rare opportunity to meet and hear the talk to be given by Reverend Dr. Ronald Y. Nakasone on September 16th at Longmont Buddhist Temple. A year or two ago, I invited Nakasone Sensei to come to Longmont to speak to us. Sadly, I cannot be there, but I would urge you to make a special effort to meet Sensei and his very gracious wife, Irene.

Sensei received his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, before coming to San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin where he was highly regarded; his Dharma talks very well attended. He later taught at the Institute of Buddhist Studies and is now a member of the core doctoral faculty at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. Sensei is also a calligraphy master. He exhibited 31 of his most recent work at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Santiago, Chile this past summer. An international speaker, he has published extensively.

Sensei will also conduct the O-Higan service on Sunday, the 17th. Please make every effort to attend the week-end of Nakasone Sensei!

Thank you,
In gassho,
Namo Amida Butsu
Rose Takamoto

Seminar and Calligraphy Demonstration



Saturday, September 16, 2017

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Longmont Buddhist Temple
(Hwy 287 & Pike Rd.)

Lunch provided

Free – donations welcome and appreciated

- Introduction: Life and Thought of Śākyamuni Buddha
- Mahāyāna Buddhism: History and Thought
- Jōdo Shinshū: Life and Thought of Shinran
- “Beauty Is the Color of Truth”: A Lecture and Demonstration on the Art of Sho (Calligraphy)

RSVP by September 10, 2017
to Jackie Tono, 303.517.4622
or board@longmontbuddhism.org

by Retired Buddhist Minister Ron Nakasone

Wheel of Dharma

Infinite Life

by Rev. Diana Thompson,
Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple

If, when I attain Buddhahood, my life should be finite, limited to even one hundred thousand kotis of nayutas of kalpas, may I not attain the perfect enlightenment.*



This is the 13th of 48 Vows made by the Bodhisattva Dharmakara before becoming Amida Buddha. It is known as the “Vow of Infinite Life.” But what does Infinite Life mean? It seems to refer to immortality, but immortality implies a specific start time that stretches into infinity. However, the Infinite Life of Amida is timeless. Both concepts are difficult to fully comprehend, yet it is possible for us to find small ways to try and understand what “timelessness” is.

I always associate timelessness with the ocean. Every trip I’ve taken to a beach has involved hours of staring out at the ocean marveling at its vastness, or floating weightless on the surface and feeling miles and miles of emptiness beneath me. Not that there is nothing there; there is so much that I cannot possibly comprehend it all. With its vast array of life forms and everything from the most ancient creatures to the most modern technology floating in its depths, the ocean is truly a space empty of time.

Then I have to go home, back to the world where time is everything. I have to check out of my hotel on time or I will be fined. Time has once again become a concrete entity. I can have too much of it or not enough, I can keep track of it or lose it. We human beings have created rules about how time is to be used and viewed and we adhere (or not) to these rules because that is how we function as a society.

However, there are benefits and drawbacks. Scheduling something at a specific time is beneficial when you want certain people all together, but it can be a nightmarish drawback for the person who is running late because punctuality is used to judge one’s character.

However, our actual experience of time is not so rigid. For instance, when I was a kid anticipating an event, my parents would say things like, “It’s only a week away,” but to me it was an eternity. This is time as we see it from our limited minds.

When we stop and consider our own varied experiences with time, it can help us understand time with the mind of a Buddha.

Time is not a concrete entity; it is merely an expression of change. Through the eyes of Great Wisdom, billions of lives are seen occurring and passing away, each linked to the other through the mere fact of existence. Through the eyes of Great Compassion, billions of small, foolish beings are seen living self-important lives controlled by hours, minutes, seconds...

Let us return to the ocean; this time, the ocean of Amida’s Great Wisdom and Compassion. I wade into it until the noise from the beach has disappeared. I lift my feet, extend my arms and dive beneath an oncoming wave. I emerge on the other side, face towards the sun, floating like a harmless piece of driftwood. The waves made with my body become new ripples in this ocean and my sweat adds to the saltiness of the already salty water. I have become a tiny part of this vast, timeless ocean, and I say *Namu Amida Butsu*.

**kotis of nayutas of kalpas: Sanskrit words describing eons of time.*

Source: Wheel of Dharma, Buddhist Churches of America, August, 2017, p. 2

Rose Takamoto bids farewell

“Thank you!” to the Longmont Buddhist Temple Sangha

It has been nearly two months since my last being in the Longmont Buddhist Temple. Sincerely, I say that it was truly a pleasure to have been a part of the LBT Sangha and to have had the friendship and the good influence of many.

During the last 8 or 9 years, LBT has struggled with finances and the loss of many of our older members whose families worked very hard in difficult times and made great sacrifices to leave us property and a building where we can gather to listen and learn The Dharma. How grateful I was to be clear of mind to hear the teachings without worry about a mortgage. Many churches are currently pressured with “reaching our building goals” stresses.

We have a Board, led by Jackie Tono, whose purpose has always been "otera no tame ni," or for the benefit of the Temple. Our numbers are few, but you few work very hard to maintain and support the Temple. How grateful I am to you. Keeping a small temple open is not easy. It is very sad when a small temple has to close its doors forever. Please work very hard to support LBT and to spread the teachings of Amida Buddha. Be selfless in your Dana with monetary and physical effort.

Remember that LBT is Jodo Shinshu and please cherish that. Read, study more Jodo Shinshu literature for your own understanding. However, as the leader on my sacred journey said, "Don't over analyze." Instead, "actualize" the Jodo Shinshu teachings.

I am grateful that Sensei John Hughes is LBT's Assistant Minister. He has a gentle, humble manner and will try to answer your questions. Please support him, but remember that he is human as are we all.

Grover and I are still unpacking and trying to fit all of our "stuff" into our house. A lesson learned here is that I need less stuff in my life. I can adjust to the weather - we call our area “fog alley.” We hear that September and October are our better, warmer months.

I look forward to September and October! Life has certainly been livable without a television. What joy when we got a reliable internet connection. And, how grateful I was when the missing saucepan lid was found in an unsuspected box with items from an office desk. However, doubled aluminum foil worked well on the saucepan, too.

And so, please know that I will think of you and will cherish my memories of Longmont Buddhist Temple, its words "Wisdom" and "Compassion" and of the friendships and fund raisers and activities we shared.

I am grateful to you all for your place in my life and memories. Thank you so much.

Please take care and be well!

With warmest regards and affection,

In gassho,

Namo Amida Butsu

rose takamoto

September 17 Celebration

Autumn Ohigan (Higan E)

It has been a long Buddhist tradition to gather in our Temples twice a year during the spring and autumnal equinox to recall the Six Paramitas – Giving or Charity, Behavior or Morality, Endurance or Patience, Endeavor or Right Effort, Meditation and Wisdom – and humbly put them into practice.

O-higan is a time for us to simply express our gratitude to Amida Buddha for awakening us to His boundless Compassion and Wisdom. Applying the Six Paramitas in our daily lives is the Jodo Shinshu way of expressing our gratitude and thanksgiving for our unconditional salvation of crossing over from this shore of birth and death to the Other Shore of Nirvana. It is not necessary for us to wait until O-higan to do so, let's proceed to do so from today for tomorrow may never come.

Coming to Temple

Why Should Buddhists Come to Temple?



by Rev. Ron Miyamura,
Midwest Buddhist Temple

Buddhists should try to come to the Temple because part of the Three Treasures is the Sangha (the group of “fellow travelers”) who support the Buddha and the Dharma. In a more basic way, being part of the Sangha is for mutual support.

It is important to be among fellow Buddhists so that we can encourage each other towards Awakening, and we can help each other avoid going to extremes (to stay on the Middle Path).

Although it is certainly possible to find Enlightenment without coming to the Temple, it is all too easy to become egotistical and find ourselves wandering away from the Dharma. The Sangha helps us stay balance

For example, it is nice to chant the sutras alone, but there is a dynamic sense when many people are chanting together. Thus, to be part of the Sangha gives us strength because of the support of others.

For a Shin Buddhist, we do not have a physical practice. Our “practice” is to Listen. To Listen means to hear with more than our ears; it means to Listen with our whole mind, body, and spirit. It is practical to be part of the Temple.

We need the Temple as a gathering place to hear the Dharma (Listen) and to participate in Buddhist activities (Live the Dharma). The Temple is our spiritual home, the place to Listen to the Dharma and to Live the Dharma.

Source: Wheel of Dharma, Buddhist Churches of America, August, 2017, p.3.

Contact Information		
Board Members		
Position: Name	Phone	Email Address
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Vice President: Lisa Halbert	303-709-5509	capaldo.halbert@gmail.com
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Financial Secretary: LaDonna Shea	303-494-2465	shearanch2@aol.com
Treasurer: Gail Hogsett	303-776-9578	gkhogsett@gmail.com
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Social Media: Cathy Maxwell Lisa Halbert	720-985-7636 303-709-5509	cath144@msn.com capaldo.halbert@gmail.com
Community Hour (Toban) Host Coordinator: Lisa Halbert	303-776-3402	capaldo.halbert@gmail.com
Membership: Kat Ference		
Music: Christina Hildebrandt	720-284-8710	soundheals@earthlink.net

Fellow Travelers - September 2017

September Calendar		
September 3	BCA Founding Day and Regular Service In memory of Sono Miyasaki	
	Temple Board Monthly Meeting	9:00 am - 11:00 am
	Newcomers' Welcome	10:00 am - 10:30 am
	Meditation Service & Dharma School	10:30 am - 11:00 am
	Family Service and Dharma Talk	11:00 am - 12:00 pm
	Toban (Coffee/Tea Hour) in Community Room Hosts: Karen and Don Wood	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
September 10	Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes	10:00 am - 11:00 am
September 16	Seminar and Calligraphy Demonstration by Retired Rev. Ron Nakasone from California (See more information on page 6	9:00 am - 3:30 pm
September 17	Rev. Ron Nakasone, Guest Speaker	
	Newcomers Welcome	10:00 am - 10:30 am
	Meditation Service & Dharma School	10:30 am - 11:00 am
	Autumn O-Higan Service	11:00 am - 12:00 pm
	Toban (Coffee/Tea Hour) in Community Room Hosts: Judy Miyasaki; Jan & Ed Kanemoto	12:00 pm - 12:00 pm
September 24	Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes	10:00 am - 11:00 am

LONGMONT BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Northwest Corner - Pike Road and S. Main Street, (606 Pike Road), Longmont, Colorado 80501

P.O. Box 2083, Longmont, CO 80502

Minister's Assistant: John NyuDō Hughes (303-997-6896); sensei@longmontbuddhism.org

Please check web site for latest updates on services, classes and event times. longmontbuddhism.org

Temple E-Mail: info@longmontbuddhism.org