



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

The Truth of Suffering

by Sensei John Hughes
Minister's Assistant

With the advent of fall we start into the last quarter of the year. Typically, the fall is my favorite time of the year. I love the cool nights and warm days with the crisp feel to the air of a typical Colorado autumn. Changing colors in the trees and fields, grandkids playing soccer, the fishing is good, I just love the fall. But this year fall arrived with clouds and rain. It's just not what I want and I'm in something of a funk.

This is suffering – Dukkha – attachment to a particular type of experience that doesn't align with reality. My wishes are not reflected in what is. This is not great suffering. It's not nuclear war with North Korea. It's not being without electricity, fresh water or food like the people in Puerto Rico. I'm safe, comfortable and generally happy, but I'm just a little put out by September ending differently than I want. Wah, wah, wah. Poor me.

In the class Reverend Nakasone presented for LBT, he began his lecture on Buddhism with the statement that the highest aspiration in life is to end suffering. He then said that the existence of God is not a Buddhist question. Whether or not there is a God is not relevant in the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha. This is a statement I had heard before, but it sounds a little stark when said so directly. The teaching is stark. If the goal is to end suffering, metaphysical questions are not of any particular value. The question to ask is how do I end suffering? How do I live this life without suffering and causing others to suffer?

The first turning of the wheel of Dharma was the teaching of the four noble truths. 1. Suffering exists. 2. The cause of suffering is attachment to (or the expectation that) objects in this world will stay constant. 3. There is a way to cause suffering to cease. 4. The way to extinguish suffering is by following the

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eight-fold path. This is the roadmap for finding a path to end suffering.

I think all of us will agree that suffering exists. To understand the cause of suffering takes a little more work. The Buddha awakened to the truth that all things change. Nothing remains the same. All conditioned objects are impermanent. When we look at science, we see the reality of this teaching. Every particle in my body was not part of me seven years ago. Science can prove that the same electron is both in a black box and not in the box simultaneously. I accept the truth of these statements even though I am incapable of personally verifying them.

It is not necessary, however, to look to science for the proof of impermanence. Our own experience shows us the truth of impermanence. We grow from infants into adults. We age and decline. Eventually we die. All living organisms go through this cycle.

Our moods change. When we are happy we try to hold onto that feeling, but sooner or later we are sad. And sooner or later we are happy again. We fall in love and we fall out of love. Our relationships are constantly evolving. My relationship with Nancy it not what it was a few days ago much less several years ago. Things are impermanent. Everything changes.

Now we arrive at a critical point in understanding the teaching of the Buddha. We suffer because we deny the reality of life in this world. We are attached (maybe addicted) to trying to keep things the same. I want to be

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happy. I want to be happy all the time. Or I am unhappy and I want to keep from ever being unhappy again. So, I grasp onto whatever I think brings happiness. I try to make things stay the same. But I know that everything will change.

The key then is to awaken to the reality that all things change. When I can accept the truth of change, I have the possibility to let go of my attachment to how I want things to be. It becomes possible to live at peace with how things are. This does not mean that I have to like how life is sometimes. It does not mean that I don't work to change what I see as wrong, unjust, immoral, or unethical. It does mean that I no longer have to suffer because of these things. It frees me up to become an agent for positive change in the world. It opens me up to being compassionate to all beings – to live with equanimity.

It means that I can enjoy the cold rainy days by putting my effort into reading a good book and finishing the painting of the meditation room.

Namo Amida Butsu,
John

News Around Longmont Buddhist Temple

Past and Present Activities for the Temple

by Jackie Tono
Temple Board President

October is here, everyone is back into their regular schedules and rhythms of life. It's good to see many of our members returning from their summer adventures.

We had a wonderful seminar on "The Roadmap to Enlightenment" conducted by retired Rev. Ronald Nakasone. Everyone who attended enjoyed the seminar and found it entertaining and very informative. He also conducted the Fall Ohigan service on Sunday to a large crowd that was eager to hear the Dharma. I think the feeling is mutual, that Rev. Nakasone and his wife, Irene, enjoyed their stay in Longmont as well as we enjoyed their teachings and company.

If you see Pete Jarvis, please thank him for his past support in editing and assembling the Temple Newsletter. Pete has decided it is time to focus his talents in a different direction.

If you drive by the Temple on Tuesday nights you will notice several cars in our parking lot. We are currently renting our Temple to Harmony Chorus so they can have choral practice for their northern members. They are a warm and friendly group of people if you are interested in joining or just stopping by to hear them rehearse.

A huge thank you to Gail Hogsett and Karen Woods for hiring a landscaping crew to come to the Temple to clean up the yard prior to Rev. Nakasone's visit. He and his wife were impressed with our small Temple.

October 1st, Sunday, will be our regular family service and our monthly board meeting. This meeting is open to everyone. We will start discussion about some events for next year. If you are interested in helping in any way please come and give us your input.

October 7th, Saturday, at 7:00 pm, Shieko Uno and her quartet will perform a concert at the Stewart Auditorium, Longmont Museum. If you have attended our previous diversity shows you would have seen this group performed. They are graciously donating a portion of the profits to our Temple. Please invite your friends and come enjoy a great evening of music by the very talented members of her quartet.

November 4th-5th is the Mountain States Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah if anyone is interested in attending. This is a great way to meet other Buddhists and to get updated on all the latest happenings in the Mountain States region.

We all live business, active lives. Please take time to slow down or stop to enjoy the wonderful fall colors that Mother Nature provides for us. Go out and enjoy the fresh air in the mountains and take a moment to just breathe.

In Gassho,
Jackie

Guided by the
Nembutsu

Mountain States District Conference November 3 – 5, 2017

*Hosted by
Salt Lake Buddhist Temple*



Friday: Arrival

Saturday: 9AM Service

10-12 Meeting

12-1 Lunch

1-3 Workshop

3-5 Free Time

5-8 Dinner & Bingo

Sunday: 9 AM meditation

10 AM Dharma

School Service

11 AM Departure

**Room Reservation at
Hotel RL by Red Lion**

Cost: \$89.00/night

**Must make reservations by
October 13, 2017**

**To make reservation call
1-800-733-5466 and give
them the group code:
SLBI103G**

**Address:
161 W 600 S
Salt Lake City, UT 84101**

Guest Speaker:

**Reverend Uma Lama
Ghishing**

**Kathmandu Hongwanji
“my path to Jodo Shinshu”**

Salt Lake Buddhist Temple
211 West 100 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

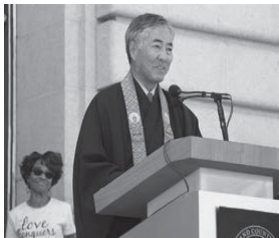
Wheel of Dharma - September, 2017

No Boundaries

By Rev. Ronald Kobata,
Buddhist Church of San Francisco

*The radiance of enlightenment, in its brilliance,
transcends all limits;
Thus Amida is called "Buddha of Light of Purity."
Once illuminated by this light,
We are freed of karmic defilements and attain
emancipation.*

— Hymns of the Pure Land #9 (*Collected Works of Shinran*, p. 326)



Rev. Ronald Kobata spoke at the
SF Unite Against Hate Rally at City
Hall on August 25. Photo by Keith
Kojimoto.

Twice a year we dedicate a service to reflect upon the seasonal changes in the natural and physical world by observing Spring or Fall O-Higan* (other shore), which coincide with the equinox. Transitioning from the heat of summer to the cool of autumn provided people with a sense of reinvigoration and anticipation for the fall harvest. They were inspired to rededicate their lives to a spiritual sense of being idealized as the "Other Shore or Higan," a state of spiritual liberation, or the Pure Land of Enlightenment.

An alternate description for the experience of awakening to the truth (the Dharma) describes breaking out of the cycle of samsara** (delusion). Regardless of how it may be described, the goal of awakening from the delusion of seeing ourselves as individual, separate beings independent unto ourselves is how I appreciate our Buddhist sense of being in and of the world we live in, together in Oneness with all beings. This awareness is awakened within us by the reality of impermanence: nothing exists forever. In this light, we come to appreciate the truth that we do not live alone.

There is a metaphor that describes an unaware life as being encased in a cocoon of self-identifying threads of thoughts. We have our own beliefs about what we

think "I" am, what "others" are, and what "the world" is. Until the causes and conditions of our life situations redirect our minds to question who or what we are, we will continue to wrap ourselves in these thought threads. Shin Buddhist writings refer to them as "blind desires." They are considered blind in that they lack light; they lack awareness. We continue to wrap ourselves in thoughts of becoming "somebody" (wanting recognition and praise), and fearing being "nobody."

The unraveling process begins with the awareness of the limits and foolishness of identifying ourselves as someone or something that exists independently and unchanging; as my "self." I appreciate the meaning of "Hearing the Dharma" as the light of day that penetrates into the cocoon, causing it to open up to the boundless world surrounding and sustaining it.

You may recall the late Lt. Col. Ellison Onizuka, one of the seven astronauts who died in the tragic explosion of the Challenger space shuttle in 1986. A recent news item brought to mind a comment I read quoting Ellison's observation from a prior successful space shuttle mission. Having been raised as a Shin Buddhist through his family's involvement with the Kona Hongwanji on the island of Hawaii, and having served as the president of the state Junior Young Buddhist Association, looking into the vast universe from the space shuttle, he shared with his mother, "I felt that I saw the Pure Land; no boundaries!"

Like being liberated out of the bondage of the cocoon of thoughts of a single, solid, static "self," we cross over to the Other Shore, the Boundless Pure Land of Immeasurable Life and Light.

*That which gives meaning to human existence is the
Pure Land*

*That which binds the Pure Land to human
existence is the Primal Vow (Hongwan)*

*That which manifests the Primal Vow in human
existence is the Nembutsu.*

*That which is inwardly sensed in human existence
by virtue of the Nembutsu is Light*

Rev. Daiei Kaneko

Namo Amida Butsu

**Higan (or o-higan): literally means "other shore" in Japanese. It refers to nirvana, enlightenment, or the Pure Land.*

***samsara: eternal cycles of birth, suffering, death, and rebirth*

Wheel of Dharma - September, 2017

Can the Nembutsu Help with Our World Issues?



By Ken Tanimoto BCA President
Watsonville Buddhist Temple

In this issue (September, 2017) of the *Wheel of Dharma* you will find an article about the beginnings of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). The BCA was born in an American concentration camp

at a time when racist hatred was sharply focused on people of Japanese descent. Today we see the same fires of hatred, greed, and ignorance being fanned at home and abroad, and the threat of nuclear war is again rearing its ugly head.

Like many of you, I have been reading about the many serious social and world issues that have been happening recently. Like you, I am disturbed by the recent actions of leaders in Venezuela, North Korea, and even in our own country.

What I am most distressed about is what happened on August 12 at a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. One innocent protester was killed and many people were seriously injured by a white supremacist who expressed the three poisons that create human suffering: greed, anger, and ignorance. Two others died in an accident related to the event.

When I first heard about this, I, too, became just as angry as the person who drove into the crowd and killed the protestor. Anger at the murderer was my first emotion, then ignorance of not really knowing what led to this event, blaming our political leaders, and quickly reacting to raw emotion. For a few moments after seeing and hearing about the incident, I felt the desire to do harm to another person.

Looking back at this terrible day as well as other events of past and present history, i.e., Japanese-American relocation camps, Muslim temple bombings and beatings, African-Americans and Latinos being racially

profiled, I felt a gut wrenching feeling that hatred and bigotry exist today more than ever.

It is my personal belief that what happened in Charlottesville could have been different if, before anything erupted, a respectful, active dialogue could have taken place so that differences could have been listened to and hopefully negotiated. Maybe I am a dreamer, but there has to be some way of interconnecting with one another before innocent people get hurt. Our world we live in is not about you or me...it's all about you *and* me.

To make any sense of world, national, and local issues, my guide to peace and tranquility is going back to our Nembutsu teachings of showing and expressing kindness and compassion. It is the only way to bring joy back into our lives. In the words of Shinran Shonin:

Even when we are evil, if we revere the power of the Vow all the more deeply, gentleheartedness and forbearance will surely arise in us through its spontaneous working.

(Collected Works of Shinran, p.676)

Namo Amida Butsu.

Fellow Travelers - October 2017

OCTOBER 7, 2017 SATURDAY 7:00 PM
Stewart Auditorium, Longmont Museum

Tickets at Museum Box office
Phone 303 651 8374 or online

Join Lee Smith, Kat Fritz, Don Perkins and Shieko Uno for an evening of music from cultures world wide, in combinations of duo, trio and quartet. We four meld our heritages, and experiences to play classics, tango, and Asian and American folk for your discovery, inspiration and joy.



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Contact Information		
Board Members		
Position: Name	Phone	Email Address
Board Members		
President: Jackie Tono	303-517-4622	jjtonto2@gmail.com
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Membership:		
Music: Christina Hildebrandt	720-284-8710	soundheals@earthlink.net

Fellow Travelers - October 2017

October Calendar		
October 1	BCA Founding Day and Regular Service In memory of Chiyo Kanemoto, Michael Miyasaki, George Kanemoto, Mary Tono	
	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: Jackie Tono; Lisa and Bob Halbert	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
October 7	Sharing the Timeless Joy of Music Stewart Auditorium, Longmont (see page 6)	7:00 pm
October 8	Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes	10:00 am - 11:00 am
October 15	Regular Family Service - Bishops' Memorial Service	
	Newcomers Welcome	10:00 am - 10:30 am
	Meditation Service & Dharma School	10:30 am - 11:00 am
	Regular Family Service	11:00 am - 12:00 pm
	Toban (Coffee/Tea Hour) in Community Room Host: Gail Hogsett	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
October 22	Mindfulness Class with Sensei John Hughes	10:00 am - 11:00 am
October 29	NO Service - Fifth Sunday of October	

LONGMONT BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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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 at longmontbuddhism.org

Temple E-Mail: info@longmontbuddhism.org