



Monthly Bulletin  
Tendai-shu New York Betsuin  
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## *Jushoku's Meanderings*

IN September I traveled to Mt. Hiei, the Tendai monastic complex located near Kyoto in Japan, to receive Nyuudan Kanjo and Endon-kai (a specific form of jukai or receiving the precepts). These two events are traditional milestones for Japanese Tendai monks. There are several other ceremonies that a Japanese monk may participate in during his or her lifetime of service to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. From the monk's perspective they are part of her or his spiritual development. From society's perspective they ensure that the teacher or master has undergone adequate training and has been authorized to teach by the Tendai authorities. Kanjo and jukai are old as old as Buddhism's origins.

Kanjo literally means sprinkling of water on one's head. The term kanjo is abisheka in Sanskrit. It is a ceremony of conferral of a particular status upon the individual. When a monk is ordained, or takes priest's vows, tokudo in Japanese, the person is now responsible to conduct his life in a particular way and is expected to give her life in service to others. It is also a beginning of the learning process for a person. Among other things such a person is permitted to study and practice esoteric teachings with a legitimate teacher. Tokudo itself is not a permit to teach, except esoteric materials if qualified. However a person who has received tokudo can perform non-esoteric ceremonies, such as weddings and funerals, as well as lead meditations and assist in directing sangha. These ceremonies are a direct connection to the origins of the first sangha, through Nagarjuna, Chih-i, Dengyo Daishi (Saicho) down to one's immediate teachers.

Nyuudan Kanjo is the first phase of a two part kanjo. The second phase is called Kaidan Kanjo. The Nyuudan kanjo is a series of learning and testing practices along with the actual conferral of status. A year or more later the practitioner participates in additional advanced practices that result in conferral of the status ajari (Skt. Acharaya), teacher or master. Taken together these kanjo are called Dembo Kanjo.

In the Kanjo-in, the temple in which the kanjo ceremony takes place, there are cloths covering the walls and windows of the room so that the instructions that takes place there-in are not seen by anyone except those participating in the ritual. This is an intimate, smoky, dimly lit space that conveys continuity, responsibility, a profound sense of awakening. Even the water that is used for the anointment is drawn at dawn by all the participants in a ritual from an ancient cistern well on the mountain.

Endon-kai denotes the "Perfect and Immediate Enlightenment" precepts proposed by Dengyo Daishi (Saicho) and established in 822. The Endon-kai precepts are given to those preparing for more advanced conferrals, such as Kaidan Kanjo.

After the morning service is performed at Dengyo Daishi's tomb, the Jukai service and reading of the precepts for all the participants is performed in the adjacent temple with a sense of solemnity that conveys the nature of these advanced vows. This is followed by a mediation service and then formal visits to the various temples on the summit of Hiei-zan as a form of gratitude and devotion.

The ceremonies I attended on Hiei-zan are difficult to express with words. When discussing rites such as these we often communicate information about the austerities and more visually impressive aspects of the rituals; the hours of sitting seiza, the long periods of mudra and mantra, or the esteemed leaders of the rituals. In a sense this is misleading because it focuses on the corporeal aspects rather than the spiritual. I have been guilty of this myself because of the difficulty of relating one's inner experience. I was not participating in these kanjo and jukai ceremonies as an anthropologist conducting participant observation of a cultural event. In fact as a scientist and a Tendai monk I find it necessary to turn off that critical discriminating portion of my intellect and suspend any doubt in the mystical if the kanjo and jukai are to be reified through my experience.

To be able to participate in these ceremonies is a privilege. I enter into these ancient rites with a sense of gratitude, humility and wonder. In the end participation is for the benefit of all sentient beings.

*Gassho, Monshin*



# Jiunzan Tendaiji and Mahasangha

## ❖ *Wednesday Evening Meditation Service Discussions*

- 2 The Four Noble Truths
- 9 Stillness as a Peace Practice
- 16 Do Buddhists Need a Sabbath?
- 30 *Kodo*—The Way of Incense

## ❖ *November Events*

5 Morning Service, 8:30 a.m.; Survey of Buddhism Class: We continue examining the *Vimilakirti Sutra*, 9–10:30 a.m.

12 Yakushi Nyorai, (Medicine Buddha) One-Day Retreat. This is an opportunity to spend more time in meditation and chanting practice as well as with teachings involving the Healing Buddha, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

There will be no Mahasangha Sunday this month due to the Sangha trip to Japan.



*Congratulations to members who took refuge in October: Yudo Burton Pasternack and Chuzan Roland Barth of Jiunzan Tendai-ji; Kobo Regi Wingo and Jisho Julia Erikson of Higashi Sangha.*

- ❖ Welcome to our newest members: Burt Pasternack and Maynard Toll of Jiunzan Tendai-ji; Regi Wingo of Higashi Sangha; and Linda McGrail of Nishi Sangha.
- ❖ Seven Sangha members will accompany Monshin and Shumon on a trip to Japan this month to visit and express our thanks to some of our friends there who have been so supportive and helpful in our development. While on Mt. Hiei they will perform the Daily Service in English.
- ❖ The October Shikan retreat was a great combination of practices, meditations and teachings. In addition to Shien (Flo) and Yudo (Burt) we were joined by Shinsen (Courtney) from North Carolina, Peter from New Hampshire and Jacob from Georgia. We thank all the participants for their

spirit and perseverance.

- ❖ Thank you to Chion Ernie Lissabet for his generous gift of a magnificent *Hora-gai* (conch shell). You will hear its luxuriant tones in the coming years.



*Thank you to Hiruma-sensei for a gift of 11 beautiful calligraphy shikishi (plaques). These were presented to the Tendai Buddhist Institute by Hiruma-sensei, President of the Japanese Tendai Calligraphy Association, when Monshin was in Japan in September.*

- ❖ Darren and Annie O'Leary were married at their home on October 15th. Congratulations! We look forward to welcoming them as a couple at a forthcoming event.
- ❖ Congratulations to Bryan and Lou Sotherland who were also wed in Old Chatham on October 15th.
- ❖ November 8th is your chance to exercise your right to choose your local leaders. It is an off year election; people often do not give these elections the attention they deserve. Get out and vote.
- ❖ Good luck to Bob Jacon. He is running for County Court Judge in Rensselaer County.
- ❖ Tendai Buddhist Institute has published *Tendai Buddhist Services for Ordained Practitioners* completing several year's work by New York Tendai-shu Betsuin doshu and soryo to produce the first authorized English translation of these texts. The initial work was begun by Ichishima-sensei with Monshin's assistance while Monshin was studying in Japan. Attention now focuses on producing a *Handbook for Tendai Buddhist Lay Practitioners*, which will include information on Tendai history, philosophy, teachings and practices. This publication, too, is expected to take some time to complete. As sections are finished they will be mounted on the [www.tendai.org](http://www.tendai.org) website to make them immediately available.

## Higashi Sangha

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### ❖ November Events

- 7 The Historical and Eternal Buddha, Part 2
  - 14 The Pali Canon
  - 21 Thanksgiving: A Buddhist Perspective on Gratitude
  - 28 Bringing it Home: Daily Practice–Potluck Wisdom led by Julia Erikson
- ❖ Regi Wingo and Julia Erikson took refuge on October 5 at Jiunzan Tendaiji

- ❖ Gail Ryan is on the mend back at home and is grateful for our thoughts and prayers
- ❖ Erica Fay hosted a week-end retreat for Presbyterian women on October 14–16. The focus was on Buddhism and Meditation
- ❖ Former Higashi member Angela Vuagniaux stopped by for a visit after completing a year's residence at Gampo Abbey in Nova Scotia. She has accepted the position of "Abbey Manager" at Sravasti Abbey, a new Tibetan Buddhist Monastery in northeastern Washington state.

## Nishi Sangha

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### ❖ November Events

- 1 One Period of Meditation; Quarterly Sangha Dinner
- 8 The Diamond Sutra - Led by Mushin Sam Press

- 15 Bodhisattva Vows (postponed in October)
- 22 The Sangha will work on Equinox Thanksgiving Dinner Preparations in Albany
- 29 Faith–Led By Koyo Susan Spang

## Ekayana Tendai Sangha

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### ❖ November Events

- 10 Shikan Meditation Service with Dharma Talk
- 24 Shikan Meditation Service with Dharma Talk

*This Hungarian temple will host next summer's Tendai Seminar organized by Ekayana Tendai Sangha for the people of Vienna and Hungary.*

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## Danish Lotus Sangha

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### ❖ November Events

- ❖ Every Thursday morning, Meditation Service and Dharma Talk, 9:30 a.m.
  - ❖ The basic track on the Six Paramitas meets from 7:30–9:30 p.m.
    - 1 Conduct
    - 15 Patience
    - 22 Energy
    - 29 Meditation
  - ❖ The advanced track:
    - 10 Karma, 7:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m.
- Required reading: *Understanding the Law of Karma*: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/9280/kamma1.htm>; *The Taste*

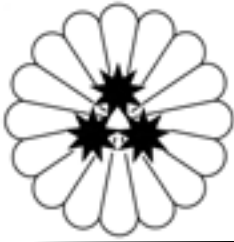
*of Freedom*: <http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/bps/leaves/bl071.html>

Discussion questions: Do you believe that one's murder could be due to one's karma? If so, does this mean the murderer's freedom to act (or not) is compromised? If an arhat is incapable of choosing to act in an unskillful way, does this mean that his or her freedom is curtailed in any meaningful way?

27 Contemplative reading, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Required reading: *The Dao of Reading*: <http://nichirenscoffeehouse.net/dharmajim/Dao-of-Reading.html>

Bring *Lotus Sutra Chapter 14*: [http://buddhistinformation.com/chapter\\_14.htm](http://buddhistinformation.com/chapter_14.htm) and *Chapter 20*: [http://buddhistinformation.com/chapter\\_20.htm](http://buddhistinformation.com/chapter_20.htm) for this session.



# November 2005

Tendai Buddhist Institute

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Danish Lotus Sangha	2  <i>New Moon</i>	3 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	4	5 Jiunzan Tendaiji Morning Service Survey of Buddhism Class
6	7 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	8 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service	9 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service  <i>First Quarter</i>	10 Ekayana Tendai Sangha Meditaion Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	11	12 Jiunzan Tendaiji  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Yakushi Nyorai Retreat</div>
13	14 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	15 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha	16 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service  <i>Full Moon</i>	17 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	18	19
20	21 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	22 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha	23  <i>Last Quarter</i>	24 Ekayana Tendai Sangha Meditaion Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	25	26
27 Danish Lotus Sangha	28 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	29 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha	30 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service			