



Jushoku's Meanderings



The Shinkyō bridge at Nikkō.

TENDAI BUDDHIST INSTITUTE

SHINGI

We are experiencing the delight of spring; longer days, warmer weather, birds returning to our landscape. There is a sense of wonder and splendor all around, a time of hope and new beginnings. Yet, Buddhism asserts that suffering, the first of the Four Noble Truths, is an essential reality of worldly existence. The first of the Eightfold Noble Path, Right View, is in effect the declaration of the reality of suffering. To further compound this seeming paradox we are taught that enlightenment is to experience with absolute clarity that *dukkha*, suffering, is inherent in the human condition.

The two concepts of enlightenment and *dukkha* are inextricably linked. This is a hard sell in today's world. Many choose to run, not walk, from the assertion that life is suffering. We torture the language trying to sidestep using the term suffering. In our pleasure oriented, enjoyment obsessed world, to admit to the reality of suffering seems like 21st century blasphemy. We sit for hours on end in meditation or chant a sacred phrase in the expectation of attaining enlightenment in this lifetime. Yet, we are often in a state of denial when it comes to suffering. The very nature of awakening is firmly rooted in attaining insight into the nature of reality. Without the deep seated, heart-mind recognition of suffering awakening is not possible.

Awakening is the state by which we see that it is possible to experience tranquility while observing, even experiencing, suffering itself. The awakened person is compassionate, engages in the society, is moral and ethical, and actively works to relieve sentient beings of suffering and exploitation. Striving for happiness without recognition of suffering is to deny true happiness and settle for a lesser surrogate. Awakening is more than the recognition of suffering. It is, however, a necessary component.

By recognizing suffering we are not denying the beauty that exists in the world. Food can be delicately succulent, a birds song fill us with joy, a companion's touch sensual and satisfying. To see the reality of suffering is an affirmation that true happiness exists. At the same time we taste the food, hear the bird's song, experience the touch, we are aware that these are transitory and not a state of continued bliss. But, at the moment they exist we can relish them for what they are. Within a Buddhist context true happiness is possible, attainable, worthy of our efforts. This is possible not through the elimination of suffering. Happiness arises within *dukkha*. Each moment is distinct and precious.

Feel the warmth of the sun penetrating your body. Rejoice in the sight of the birds returning to your backyard. Experience the vibrant force that pulses through the earth. Now is a time to walk outside in a sense of wonder and gratitude. The blessings of the Buddha-fields are everywhere to be enjoyed. Do not squander your life.

Monthly Bulletin

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Gassho, Monshin



Jiunzan Tendaiji and Mahasangha

April Events

- ❖ **Class and Morning Service**
1 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Three—*Parable*, 8:30–10:30 a.m.; Archiving Project - 11:00 AM – 3:30 PM.
- ❖ **One-Day Retreat**
8 *Buddhist Sounds* This one day retreat includes meditations and teachings around the use of sounds in services and ceremony. Please let your sangha leader know if you will attend.
- ❖ **Meditation Meetings**
Every Wednesday, Shikan Meditation, 7–8 p.m.; tea following. Every Sunday, a lecture discussion, followed by a full meditation service, 10:30 a.m. – noon. Pot-luck lunch follows the meditation on Sunday, April 30 only.
2 Engaged Buddhism – It’s Origins and Relationship to Awakening
9 Shakyamuni Buddha
16 Awakening Without Remorse
23 The Role of the Scholar/Practitioner (Article available before Discussion)
30 An Intermediate Lay Practice
- ❖ **Other Events**
8 Shakyamuni Buddha’s Birthday
12 Yakushi Nyorai Service during regular meditation service
30 Mahasangha Sunday; Doshu/Soryo Kai, 1–4 p.m.

Mahasangha

- ❖ Starting in May, we have a pot-luck dinner on the first Wednesday evening of the month after Shikan Meditation.
- ❖ Please keep in mind those that are in need. Bring non-perishable food to Jiunzan Tendai-ji. This offering is brought to the Chatham food pantry for distribution.
- ❖ Although it didn’t feel like spring with wind-chill factors, the calendar said it was time for the annual O-Higan retreat on March 17-19. Monshin led the Mindfulness retreat for a small group who braved the wind temperatures and were grateful for the new hondo. No one admitted missing the cold floor and wind-raised carpets of the old hondo although they were the fuel for some wonderful stories, mostly true!
Thanks to Chion Ernie Lissabet and Jacob Halcomb for travelling from Virginia and Georgia respectively to be part of the group. And thanks to Monshin, Shumon and Gojun for leading the group.
- ❖ **Following are events for the next several months. Mark your calendars now! Dates are subject to change. Complete listings through the end of the year are on-line at**

www.tendai.org

- May 3 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- May 6 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Four, 8:30–10:30 a.m.; Spring Cleanup Day, 10:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
- May 13 Retreat
- May 21 Mahasangha Sunday; Sangha Community Meeting, 1 p.m.: Come hear of Center developments and share your thoughts and ideas
- June 3 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Five, 8:30–10:30 a.m.
- June 7 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- June 21-July 2 Doshu Gyo
- July 2 Mahasangha Sunday; Doshu Tokudo
- July 5 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- July 23 Mahasangha Sunday
- August 2 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- August 5 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Six, 8:30–10:30 a.m.
- August 20 Mahasangha Sunday
- September 6 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- September 9 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Seven, 8:30–10:30 a.m.; Refuge Workshop, 10:30 a.m. Attendance is required for all who wish to take refuge this month.
- September 14 Sodai Meeting, 7 p.m.
- September 20 Refuge Service held during regular Shikan Meditation
- September 22-24 O-Higan Retreat
- September 24 Mahasangha Sunday; Segaki Service, Doshu/Soryo Kai
- October 4 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- October 7 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Eight, 8:30–10:30 a.m.; Autumn Cleanup Day 10:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
- October 15 Mahasangha Sunday
- November 1 Potluck after Shikan Meditation
- November 4 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Nine, 8:30–10:30 a.m.
- November 10-12 Retreat
- November 12 Mahasangha Sunday
- December 2 Sutra Study Class and Morning Service, *Lotus Sutra* Chapter Ten, 8:30–10:30 a.m.
- December 6 Potluck after Shikan Meditation

Higashi Sangha

April Events

❖ **Meditation Service and Dharma Discussion every Monday, 6:30 p.m., East Mountain Retreat Center, 8 Lake Buel Rd., Great Barrington, MA**

3 Opening Ceremony/Pot Luck Dinner. Moving Back to East Mountain

10 Intention, Heart of Our Practice

17 Sunyata, The Inherent Emptiness in All Phenomena

23 Skillful Means

30 Happiness and the Buddhist Path, led by Ansu Jane Majdalany

❖ On Sunday March 19th, the third anniversary of the Iraq war, Sansho Tamarack Garlow participated in an Interfaith Peace Service organized by the Unitarian Church of Great Barrington. Following the service was a candlelight vigil and peace walk from the church to the Great Barrington town hall and back.

❖ Members of Higashi sangha are pleased to note that attendance has risen within the past two months. Several newcomers have continued to attend our weekly meditation service and discussions. We welcome them!

❖ Higashi member Chris Larkin found it necessary move out of the area because he couldn't find work here. We wish him well in Ithaca.

Nishi Sangha

April Events

❖ **Meditation Service and Dharma Discussion every Tuesday, 6 p.m., Friends' Meeting House, Madison Avenue, Albany, NY**

4 Focus on Sangha

11 Ikebana

18 Mindfulness Practice

25 One Meditation Period followed by Quarterly Sangha

Dinner

❖ On March 21 Nishi Sangha members put in a total of twelve hours at the Regional Food Bank sorting food for the needy. Thanks to those who participated: Sam, Dana, MaryJane, Susan, John and Sandy.

❖ Thanks to Koyo Susan Spang and Myoju MaryJane Zanelli for volunteering their expertise for the Mahasangha archiving project. Susan will be our lead computer geek and MaryJane our preeminent historian.

Ekayana Tendai Sangha

April Events

❖ **Meditation Service every second and fourth Thursday of the month.**

6 Shikan Meditation and Dharma Talk: *Lotus Sutra* Chapter 5 (Yakusoyu) and Chapter 6 (Juki).

27 Shikan Meditation and Dharma Talk: *Lotus Sutra* Chapter 7 (Kejoyu) and Chapter 8 (Gohyaku Deshi Juki).

Danish Lotus Sangha

April Events

❖ **Meditation Service every Tuesday, 7:30–9:30 p.m., Meditation Service and discussion every Thursday 9:30–10:30 a.m. and the last Sunday of the month, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.**

A new "Basics of Buddhism Course" runs from March 28 through May 23. Readings for each week's topic can be found at www.Lotus-Sangha.dk The topics for April are:

4 The fourth Ennobling Truth

18 The Middle Way

25 The Buddhist Canon

❖ Our new meditation hall is under construction and will be completed for the April 30th dedication, which will include a one-day retreat and pot luck dinner. It includes a kitchenette, small bathroom, a 'meeting' or 'study' room, and an

extra bedroom for guest-teachers, visitors, or sangha-members who want to use the place for private retreats.

The first silent retreat was a great success with a challenging yet manageable schedule. One participant commented, "You really can't make that many mistakes when you're silent".

❖ Shoken Pia Trans is translating into Danish the excerpts of the *Lotus Sutra* as they appear in *Tendai Buddhist Services for Ordained Practitioners*, published by the Tendai Buddhist Institute, enabling us to begin a *Lotus Sutra* study class. There is currently no Danish translation of the sutra available. We will approach the sutra in a number of ways; intellectually through reading and discussing it, devotionally through chanting it in Japanese, and we will open our hearts to it through contemplations.



April 2006

Tendai Buddhist Institute

Tendai-shu New York Betsuin and Karuna Tendai Dharma Center www.tendai.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<p>1</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Morning Service Sutra Study Class Archive Project</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Higashi Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Shikan Meditation</p> <p><i>First Quarter</i></p>	<p>6</p> <p>Ekayana Tendai Sangha Meditaion Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Buddhist Sounds Retreat</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Higashi Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Shikan Meditation</p> <p><i>Yakushi Nyorai Day</i></p>	<p>13</p> <p>Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service</p> <p><i>Full Moon</i></p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Higashi Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Shikan Meditation</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Ekayana Tendai Sangha Meditaion Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>21</p> <p><i>Last Quarter</i></p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service</p> <hr/> <p>30</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service Mahasangha Sunday Doshu/Soryo Kai Danish Lotus Sangha</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Higashi Sangha Meditation Service</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Jiunzan Tendaiji Shikan Meditation</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service</p> <p><i>New Moon</i></p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>