



TENDAI BUDDHIST INSTITUTE  
SHINGI

## *Jushoku's Meanderings*

**M**ARCH is a very special month on the spiritual calendar, not just the Buddhist yearly cycle. It is the month of the spring equinox, Spring O-Higan in Japanese Buddhist terms. In an astronomical sense an equinox actually marks a point when the sun is observed directly above the equator. The Latin term equinox reveals its observable phenomenon to those of us who are not astronomers; the word equinox is translated as equal night.

It is an observable astronomical event that also marks points in the agricultural cycle. Many religious traditions and cultures celebrate or mark the equinox. The Zoroastrian year marks the equinox, called Noruz, as the beginning of the year. As a celebration it marked the victory of warmth and light over the cold and dark, a preview of the renewal of the cosmos. The dates of Easter are related to the Pagan periods of marking yearly renewal.

In Buddhist terms O-Higan is a week long period three days before and after the date of the equinox, this year seven minutes after midnight on March 21st. The equal period of light and dark mark the time when the spiritual and material realms are in balance. The term Higan comes from Shigan, which is translated as gathering on the other shore. The imagery is to cross over from the shore of the world (samsara or suffering) to the shore of awakening, or enlightenment. O-Higan is associated with the Six Perfections or Six Paramitas. It is a time of spiritual renewal. It is interesting how each East Asia school of Buddhism emphasizes this period in a slightly different way. In the Zen schools there is an emphasis on meditation devoted to selflessness. The Jodo traditions use this period as a time of praising Amitabha Buddha for assisting those who have faith in transcending the samsara world to the Pure Land. Tendai has many practices, including a time set aside for pilgrimages, attention to the Six Paramitas, remembrance of one's ancestors, contemplations and a re-examination of one's spiritual path.

This month we will hold our bi-annual O-Higan retreat from March 23rd – 25th, as well as hold Mahasangha Sunday on Sunday the 25th. If you are able please attend both or one of these events. Additionally, use this period to reinvigorate your practice. Take each of the Six Paramitas (Dana – generosity, Silla – ethics and morality, Kshanti – patience, Virya – persistence or energy, Dhyana – meditation and contemplation, Prajna – wisdom) and look at them in your life each day contemplate their meaning and make them part of who you are. They are the Buddhist Path. Talk the Path, Walk the Path, Be the Path.

*Gassho... Monshin*



Monthly Bulletin

Tendai-shu New York Betsuin

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# Jiunzan Tendaiji and Mahasangha

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## March Events

### ❖ Sutra Class and Morning Service

10 8:30 a.m., Morning Service followed at 9 a.m. by *Lotus Sutra*, Chapter 13, "Perseverance".

### ❖ Meditation Meetings

Every Wednesday 6 p.m., discussion, Meditation Service and pot luck dinner

7 *Punya*: The Heart of a Buddhist Spiritual Life

14 Meditation I—Samatha

21 Meditation II—Vipashyana

28 Meditation III—The Relationship between Samatha and Vipashyana

### ❖ Other Events

March 23–25 **O-Higan Spiritual Exploration Retreat.**

O-Higan is a time when the spiritual and material worlds are in closest alignment. The energy that dominates during this period is very conducive to spiritual exploration. This retreat will look at that exploration within a Tendai context. This three day retreat is open to people of all levels of practice. The O-Higan retreat is the last retreat open to everyone for several months, so register early.

March 25, 10 a.m., **Mahasangha Sunday** Discussion: Six Paramitas.

### ❖ Announcements

Shoshin and her husband Bob have just returned from a diving trip to Patagonia and Antarctica. We're looking forward to hearing all about her trip. Welcome back Shoshin.



*Shumon in front of the Torii at the shrine named after her family, Kumasaki, in Kagagoshima, Japan."*

Many people have sent get-well messages during Monshin's bout with the flu and pneumonia. Thank you for your support during a very trying period.

Schedule updates and future events can be seen at [www.tendai.org](http://www.tendai.org).

❖ Troy Porter wrote this poem after attending the Shomyo for Peace concert at The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City last October. He offered it to us as an expression of his profound experience at that time.

## Awakening

The sound of a million voices  
Traveling through time and space, over land and sea, civilization and culture  
To embrace every living organism.  
The chant for life fills my ears.

The spiritual energy hatches me  
From my shell and into a world that is endless and serene.  
It is the sight of a million stars being born  
Before my eyes and showering me  
With a blanket of eternal bliss.

The Sound pulls my ear  
And enters my body  
Like the soft wind brushing by.

It is pure like spring water,  
Washing over my heart and  
Opening it like a flower.  
Every heartbeat is like an earthquake  
Pulsing shockwaves to the depths of my soul.

The energy of life vibrates in my core.

It is a sound so peaceful, yet so powerful.  
It is as natural as the Sun rising and  
As beautiful as new life.

## Nishi Sangha

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

### *March Events*

6 – Buddha Nature led by Mushin

13 – 'Commit to Sit' – *Tricycle's* 28-day Meditation 'Challenge' led by Mushin

20 – Sangemon led by Shoshin

27 – Bishamonten led by Shosin

## Nyoirin-An (Ekayana Tendai Sangha)

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❖ *Meditation Service every second and fourth Thursday of the month, Nyoirin-An meditation room in Naubeim near Frankfurt, Germany.*

### *March Events*

8 *Bhaishajya-guru-vaidurya-prabha-rajā-Sutra* (Yakushi

Nyorai / Master of Medicine Sutra)

22 *Yakushi Nyorai Sutra Part II*

See for the text: "*Chinese Mahayana Buddhism*" at <http://www.abudhistlibrary.com/Buddhism/> "

## Danish Lotus Sangha

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❖ *Meditation Service, every Thursday, 9:30–10:30 a.m.*

*Meditation Service and discussion, every Tuesday, 7:30–9:30 p.m.*

### *March Events*

2–4 Retreat

25 Kaihogyo

There will no Sunday meetings this month.

❖ Shoken is teaching an eight-week course in Buddhist meditation and stress-relief at an IT-company, covering mindfulness-meditation as well as ethics and philosophy based on the Buddha's teaching

❖ Sangha meetings will be held in Copenhagen during the upcoming months. Details will follow.

## Washington Tendai Sangha

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❖ *Meditation Service and Dharma Discussion every Sunday, 7:30–10 a.m., Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department, 3900 Lee Highway in Arlington, VA. News and event updates are available at the sangha web site [washingtontendai.org](http://washingtontendai.org).*

### *March Events*

Dharma study for the month of March covers the Six Paramitas, as well as an introduction to the *Lotus Sutra*.

For more information, e-mail Reverend Chion Ernie Lissabet at [wisdomcommunications@verizon.net](mailto:wisdomcommunications@verizon.net). All are welcome!

## Higashi Sangha

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❖ *Meditation Service and Dharma Discussion every Monday, 6:30 p.m., South Berkshire Friends Meeting House, State Rd., Great Barrington, MA*



# March 2007

Tendai Buddhist Institute

Tendai-shu New York Betsuin and Karuna Tendai Dharma Center [www.tendai.org](http://www.tendai.org)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Danish Lotus Sangha Retreat</div>	3  <i>Full Moon</i>
4 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Danish Lotus Sangha Retreat</div>	5 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	6 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	7 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	8 Nyoirin-An Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	9	10 Jiunzan Tendaiji Morning Service and Sutra Class
11 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service  <i>Last Quarter</i>	12 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service  <i>Yakushi Nyorai Day</i>	13 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	14 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	15 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	16	17
18 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service  <i>New Moon</i>	19 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	20 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	21 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	22 Nyoirin-An Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	23 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Jiunzan Tendai-j</div>	24 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">O-Higan Retreat</div>
25 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">O-Higan Retreat Mahasangha Sunday</div> Danish Lotus Sangha Kaihogyo	26 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	27 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	28 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service			

Jiunzan Tendaiji Higashi Tendai Sangha Nishi Tendai Sangha Danish Lotus Sangha Nyoirin-An  
Washington Tendai Sangha