



TENDAI BUDDHIST INSTITUTE
SHINGI

Meanderings:

The end of the path is the beginning of the path.

WHEN most people think of Buddhism, they think of monks meditating in the fastness of mountain retreats. Even those seriously interested in or pursuing the Buddha path may equate it with meditation, as if that were the only practice, or at least the most important one. When I'm speaking with those new to the Buddhadharma and I mention that there are Buddhist schools that don't meditate at all, the response is often a surprised, "Oh, really?!"

Yet in Shakyamuni's own exposition of the Buddha path, as well as those that came later, meditation is considered as only one part of a complete practice, and a rather advanced part at that. In the Eight-Fold Noble Path, Shakyamuni didn't get to meditation until step seven. In the Six Paramitas, "*Dhyana*"—or meditation—is listed as number five. Chih-i, the sixth century Chinese monk responsible for formulating T'ien Tai (*J. Tendai*) wrote a ten-chapter book whose title is sometimes translated as *Shamatha/Vipashyana Meditation for Beginners*. Even in this book about meditation, he didn't begin to speak about *how* to meditate until Chapter Six.

The preliminary steps in each of these expositions concern how one goes about living effectively in daily life by cultivating generosity, ethics, patience and perseverance. Effective living provides the essential foundation for formal meditation practice by removing those factors that may disturb the mind. Through meditation practice we achieve a clearer vision of reality as it actually is (as opposed to our habitual vision as to how we hope it might be; or are afraid that it might be; or think it should be).

This enhanced vision is not developed for its own sake, however, but to enable us to live even more effectively in the world with compassion for others. So the insights realized through meditation do stand alone and separate from life (nor are they an escape from life), but are to be integrated into our life. Insight is perhaps the easy part of practice. It may not be difficult to have sublime experiences on the cushion. The difficult part is integration, for it requires us to recognize and own up to our own our habitual desires. A friend, confronted by a series of distressing experiences, recently asked me if the universe tests us by making life more difficult once we express our intention to follow the path. No, it doesn't. Our increased awareness leads us to realize how we often create our own *dukkha*—"suffering" and that realization can be painful.

There are many stories, both historical and modern, of those who are able to attain 'advanced' states of meditation, yet are unpleasant in their dealings with those around them, kicking the dog and yelling at the neighbor's kids. Sometimes these are cast as the way of 'crazy wisdom', the bodhisattva who seeks to shock others out of their comfortable expectations. And while there may be some few for who this is true, I believe that in many more cases it is simply a failure to integrate the realizations gained from practice into daily life. The end of the path truly is the beginning of the path. The last of the Ten Oxherding pictures from the Zen tradition expresses it well. This last picture, showing the culmination of the Buddha path, is entitled "Returning to the Marketplace with Helping Hands." With humility and humbleness, manifesting those preliminary qualities of generosity, ethics, patience, perseverance, the bodhisattva lives in the world with compassion for all. That is a worthy model to follow.



Jiunzan Tendaiji and Mahasangha

August Events

❖ *Meditation Meetings*

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

- 1 Lotus Sutra Chapter 17 – Description of Merits
- 8 The Relationship between Study and Meditation
- 15 Dengyo Daishi: A Source of Inspiration
- 22 Pilgrimage as a Buddhist Practice
- 29 Learning from Chih-i's Li Zhifa

❖ *Sutra Class and Morning Service*

During the summer people are on vacation and enjoying time with their families. As a result we are taking a break from the Saturday Survey of Buddhism Class. Join us in October

❖ *Other Events*

August 30 Jun-san and others from Nipponzan Myohoji Grafton Peace Pagoda will be staying with us for the evening as they walk between Grafton, NY, and Ground Zero in New York City. If you are interested in walking with them, part or all the way, please contact Jun-san at the Grafton Peace Pagoda.

Mid August Mrs. Kazuyo Osawa, a member of Tendai Calligraphy Association, will be visiting us for several days with her grandchildren. Mrs. Osawa is one of the calligraphers who so generously donated several exquisite works that are part of our calligraphy exhibit. She wanted to visit the exhibit this summer.

❖ *Announcements*

Speaking of calligraphy, we will be reassembling the exhibit in October. The exhibit will be part of several events, including a Kaihogyo retreat at the end of the month. Mushin Sam Press is working on publicity and other aspects of the October exhibit. He is seeking several people to give him a hand.

The 2007 Gyo (training) was held this year between June 20 and July 1. For the Doshu and Soryo who participated this was especially meaningful. The gyo insures that the leaders of the sangha and others who assist in our community are competently trained and they themselves undergo rigorous spiritual practices so they can provide personal direction. Thank you for your patience and support for this important Buddhist activity.

This fall we have two retreats in store. The first is the O-Hi-

gan retreat from the evening of September 21 through the afternoon of September 23. The second is a Kaihogyo retreat from October 26 through 28. A Kaihogyo is a walking meditation that is conducted outside. There will be more about both retreats in next month's *Shingi*. Retreats at the Dharma Center are a wonderful way to experience the true nature of Buddhist practice and gain a closer relationship with the sangha.

During the summer we have a tendency to let our practice slide a bit. After all we are vacationing, enjoying the warmth, kicking back a bit. This is a reminder that awakening comes from awareness and perseverance. To quote the evening gatha, "... now is the time to awaken, AWAKEN. Do not squander your life."

On July 19 Ichishima-sensei (the head of our lineage) underwent a serious operation. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers during his recovery.

❖ *Celestial Drum Tendai Buddhist Sangha*

Seishin Jack and Taff Fitterer together with a few interested folks have established the newest Betsuin sangha serving Indian Lake and the surrounding Adirondack Mountain communities in northern New York State. A dharma talk and meditation service is offered each Thursday evening beginning at 6:30 p.m. Call 518-648-6494 or email fitterer@acmenet.net for directions.



Bill Wilson receives guidance during the June Calligraphy Workshop when members of the Japanese Tendai Calligraphy Association came to Jiunzan Tendai-ji for this one-day event attended by about twenty sangha members.

Washington Tendai Sangha

❖ *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.*

The members of the Washington Tendai Sangha have recently been discussing the meaning of the Tendai Buddhist prin-

ciple, "Light up a corner of your world," and its modern Buddhist equivalent, the concept of "Engaged Buddhism." We will perform volunteer work as forest gardeners together as a group a few times a year, in cooperation with The Earth Sangha, a Buddhist nonprofit environmental organization in the Mid-Atlantic region, dedicated to preserving our battered natural environment. For more information about the Earth Sangha, see their web site at www.earthsangha.org.

Nishi Sangha

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

August Events

- 7 Collective Karma, Part II—Systemic and Social Influences on Individual Moral Behavior; led by Koyo
- 14 'An Inconvenient Practice'; led by Shoshin
- 21 Tendai Buddhism—Some Distinguishing Features; led by Mushin
- 28 Sitting only; no discussion

Nishi Sangha members donated their time recently helping out at the Albany area food bank.



Nyoirin-An (Ekayana Tendai Sangha)

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

August Events

Nyoirin-An will be on summer vacation during August. There will be an Ekayana Tendai Weekend Retreat from Friday, August 3 to Sunday, August 5 in Hungary near Austrian border.

During their trip through central Europe in May Onyo Susan and Philip Bues visited Daishin Joachim Willfahrt at his temple room Nyoirin-An in Naubeim, Germany, and made some excursions with him to picturesque sites.



Danish Lotus Sangha

❖ *Meditation Service, every Thursday, .9:30–10:30 a.m.*
Meditation Service and discussion, every Tuesday, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

August Events

The regular schedule resumes after summer vacation period on August 7.

Higashi Sangha

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

August Events

- 6 The Six Realms Of Samsara
- 13 The Four Divine Abodes
- 20 3,000 Worlds In An Instant
- 27 Pot Luck Wisdom, TBA, led by Craig Johnson

❖ Two Sangha members are in need of our thoughts and prayers for healing: Ansu Jane Majdalany is recovering from surgery and Musho Margaret Welch severely injured her ankle.

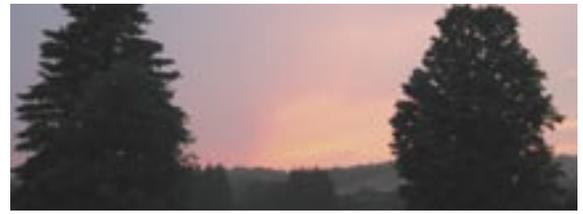
For the first time in three years Gould Farm has returned to Higashi. Each week 5–8 guests and staff of this residential treatment center come for the evening meditation service. The Dharma talks have been retooled to accommodate those at the beginners level. The interest has been high for a number of the guests



August 2007

Tendai Buddhist Institute

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



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			1	2 Celestial Drum Meditation Service	3	4	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Ekayana Tendai Retreat, Hungary </div> <i>Last Quarter</i>			5 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service	6 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	7 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	8 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	9 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service Celestial Drum Meditation Service
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15 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service <i>New Moon Yakushi Nyorai Day</i>	16 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	17 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	18 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	19 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service Celestial Drum Meditation Service	20 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	21 Celestial Drum Meditation Service	
22 Jiunzan Tendaiji Mahasangha Sunday Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Kaihogyo	23 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service <i>First Quarter</i>	24 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	25 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	26 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service Celestial Drum Meditation Service	27 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	28 Celestial Drum Meditation Service	
29 Washington Tendai Sangha Meditation Service	30 Higashi Sangha Meditation Service	31 Nishi Sangha Meditation Service Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service <i>Full Moon</i>	32 Jiunzan Tendaiji Meditation Service	33 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service Celestial Drum Meditation Service <i>Full Moon</i>	34 Danish Lotus Sangha Meditation Service	35 Celestial Drum Meditation Service	

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