

September 2011

SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



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Jushoku's Meanderings

The Six Paramitas are an inner cultivation, a daily practice for wise, compassionate, loving, and virtuous living. Unlike precepts or vows, the six Paramitas are not promises to avoid actions. The Six Perfections are a roadmap to transcendence.

[\(cont.\)](#)



Quicklinks

September Events Calendar



Weekly Meditation Services (WMS) are on Wednesday evenings. They begin at 6pm with a discussion or talk (see below for this month's discussion topics). At about 7pm there is a meditation service, followed at 8pm by a potluck supper. All of Wednesday evening's events are open to the public. There is no fee, and reservations are not required.

September Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

7th Jushoku Q&A - Sangha members have given a lot of positive feedback responding to the "Stump the Sensei" evenings. Have you had a question from your readings, discussion, or from your practice in the last month? Write it down so you don't forget it, and ask it during this evening's Q&A session.

14th The Daily Service - The service we perform before the meditation every Wednesday evening is the Tendai Daily Service. What are the meanings of the various elements of this service? This is an exploration of poetry, devotion, philosophy, and practice.

21st O-Higan - This twice-yearly seasonal observance is extremely important to the Buddhist yearly cycle. We will discuss the observances surrounding the Autumnal Equinox.

28th Buddhism and Religious Diversity - Most of us were not born into Buddhist families. We made a choice to follow the Buddhist path. How does this affect our views of other religious traditions? Read the article in the Fall 2011 *Tricycle* magazine and join us as we inspect our responses to

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Our Other Sangha:

[Blue Mountain Sage Sangha--Denver, CO](#)

[Celestial Drum Sangha--Indian Lake, NY](#)

[California Tendai Buddhist Monastery](#)

[Tendai Denmark](#)

[Great River Ekayana Sangha--Arlington, VA](#)

[Nagado Sangha--Springfield, MA](#)

[Nishi Sangha--Albany, NY](#)

[Red Maple Sangha--Renfrew, Ottawa, Canada](#)

a variety of religious traditions. You can find the article online at:

<http://www.tricycle.com/feature/buddhism-and-religious-diversity>

Events

10th Sutra Class and Morning Service, 8:30 - 10:30 AM

- *Vajrachedika Prajnaparamita Sutra (The Diamond Sutra)*
Please obtain the following book for this class: *The Diamond Sutra: Transforming the Way We Perceive the World*, by Mu Soeng, Wisdom Publications (2000). It is one of the earliest Mahayana Sutras and is considered by many scholars as foundational to subsequent Mahayana thought. We will use this opportunity to investigate the context of the early Bodhisattva path, which then locates sutra that were compiled later in time. It should be readily available. OK, so we didn't cover as much text as we planned last month; I'm shocked! This month we should finish the first section through page 31.

11th From Despair to Hope - to memorialize the 10th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001. Sunday. 3:00 PM. Hubbard Interfaith Sanctuary, 959 Madison Avenue, Albany, (on The College of Saint Rose campus, between Partridge St. and North Main Ave.) By coming together from different religious traditions we give witness that our faith, our care for those who suffer, and our shared humanity forge bonds that cannot be broken. Sponsored by an ad hoc coalition of representatives of several faith traditions. For more information, call or e-mail Tendai Buddhist Institute.

20th - 24th & 26th O-Higan Morning Service and Meditations: 5:30 - 6:30 AM. Join us for morning meditations during this very opportune period of the Buddhist Calendar.

23rd -25th O-Higan Retreat: The Six Paramitas as a Comprehensive Practice. From 7:30 PM on Friday evening until about 1 PM on Sunday. It is traditional to examine and devote oneself to the Six Perfections during this seven-day long period. We will be doing this during the retreat and exploring how this might constitute one's regular practice.

Upcoming Events

The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan: Art of Gandhara is on view at Asia Society Museum through Oct. 30, 2011. From an excerpt of a New York Times article:

"After acknowledging the 'geopolitical roadblocks' that held up the exhibition's opening (and which were detailed in an earlier *Times* account), critic Holland Cotter asks, 'Is the show worth all the diplomatic headaches it caused?'

"His emphatic answer: 'With its images of bruiser

bodhisattvas, polycultural goddesses and occasional flights into stratosphere splendor, it is."

"After providing some historical background on the exhibition, and attempting to convey its wide-ranging stylistic diversity, Cotter concludes, 'It pulses with human warmth. That's one of the things we go to great art for, though in this case, and against very long odds, some of that great art has come to us.'"

We would like to put together a Tendai Buddhist Institute Road Trip to NYC for this acclaimed show. The dates we are considering are Saturdays and Sundays in October, until October 30. Vote for the date you would most like to go on the bulletin board in the main house, or let Koki or Shumon know.

Notes

The Canaan Congregational Church in Canaan, NY seeks a part-time bookkeeper (2-3 hours a week). Contact the church for a full job description at 518-781-4775 or at canaanucc@fairpoint.net by September 15, 2011.

Do you have a question or a topic you would like to have addressed on a Wednesday evening discussion? Please [let Monshin know](#). Your question or topic is no doubt of interest to other people.

Food Pantry at Jiunzan Tendai-ji - The number of families who now depend on the food pantry has grown as a direct result of the continued economic recession. There are fewer and fewer resources going to more and more people. Please bring non-perishable food items to the Tendai Buddhist Institute on Wednesdays. We contribute these items to the Chatham Silent Food Pantry.

Meanderings (cont. from side bar at left)



They are a method we can follow to hone our Buddhist practice and further develop the Four Brahmavihara (loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity).

The Six Paramitas are:

1. Dāna: generosity, giving of oneself
2. Śīla: virtue, morality, discipline, proper conduct
3. Kṣānti: patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, endurance
4. Vīrya : energy, diligence, vigor, effort

5. Dhyāna: concentration, contemplation

6. Prajñā: wisdom, insight

In your mindfulness practice this month use these six important Buddhist characteristics as the focus of Smriti.

Gassho . . . [Monshin](#)

The Third Jewel--Where sangha members share ideas, poetry, and art to enrich everyone's Buddhist practice.

Peter Donahoe's Meditation Space . . .



"Here is a photo of the Buddha altar that I have set up in my studio/hayloft. I will continue to use it until the weather gets too cold to sit in this uninsulated-unheated loft and then I will return to sitting in my office in the house....

"Most of the furniture was assembled from scavenging/yard sales/donations, but the flowers come from our garden. The head of the Buddha was given to me a number of years ago from a friend who practices Ayurvedic medicine; this was long before I had any interest in Buddha dharma.

"The seated Buddha on the table is Yakushi Nyorai, the Buddha of Healing; and the mala beads on the left I made from lapis lazuli in keeping with his title 'Medicine Master of Lapis Lazuli Radiance'.

"The two cylinders are spaghetti cans that I store the incense sticks in. The zafu is usually kept in the box on the table. I made the box out of plywood that I found discarded on the streets of Albany. I painted the inside a vibrant yellow, and on the black lid I painted a white enso to contrast with the more muted blue and brown trim of the exterior. The mat sits in the space beneath the table top.

Poetry by Peter Donahoe . . .

Wabi Sabi salvage,
But never mind, no matter
Where the dust delights

Chinese cabbage pot
Holding incense for Buddha,
Chirping crickets laugh.

Glads for a lotus.
Shakyamuni is composed,
Sits like Sumeru

There is no mirror.
No place for dust to settle.
What flower twirling?

Kasyapa, he smiles
Vimalakirti, silent.
Frogs jump in old ponds.

Horse stall, chicken coop,
Hay loft for meditation.
Old barn holds new hopes.

Winds blow from the North.
A chicken cackles with pride.
Your labor, my lunch.

August's cone flowers
A chipped blue vase to hold them,
Earth quaking shivers

Turkey gobbles, pecks.
Heron glides facing forward.
Which mind of these mine?

Call for material: Please [send the Shingi](#) photographs, artwork, poems, book reviews, articles, etc. that you have created that you consider an outgrowth of your Buddhist practice or that you think reflect Buddhist themes, ideas, questions, etc. If submitting an image, you may wish to include a short statement sharing some of your thoughts to accompany it.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact . . .

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