

March 2012

# SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



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## March 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.

### March Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

**7 Q&A** - It is questions time again. Has here been anything, regarding the Buddhadharma that you have thought about and have not found a satisfactory answer? This is your chance. Some people are shy about asking a certain question because they think, 'it's only interesting to me.' Chances are other people have the same question but are also too shy to ask. Come prepared with questions.

**14 Dealing with Death from a Buddhist Perspective.** It has been posited that all religions arose from a consideration of death. That is arguable. However, death is certainly one of the major existential questions people look to religion to answer. It is also the one year anniversary this month in which Japan experienced the worst earthquake and tsunami in recorded history. Tens of thousands lost their lives. There will be memorial and other services throughout Japan at the one year anniversary. We will discuss this topic with an eye to what we can learn from the exercise about our own frame of mind.

**21 Buddhism and Religious Diversity** Please read this article by Rita Gross in Tricycle Magazine, the link is below, and join the discussion. Rita writes,

"Instead of desperately desiring answers to unanswerable questions, Buddhist practitioners should learn how to be helpful in a religiously diverse world."

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

**28 Jukyo (Confucianism) and its Relationship with Bukyo (Buddhadharma).** In China Rújiào (Chinese Confucian teachings) have a complex relationship with Buddhist teachings. While Rújiào influenced the way Butso developed in China and beyond, there was also persecution of Buddhists by Confucian authorities. We will look at how these two Asian traditions influenced and in some cases transformed each other.

## Other Events

**4 Sutra Class and Morning Service, 8:30 - 10:30 AM - Vajrachedika Prajnaparamita Sutra (The Diamond Sutra).** It is as one of the earliest Mahayana sutras and is considered by many scholars as foundational to subsequent Mahayana thought. Don't miss this enjoyable class. Please obtain the following book for this class - *The Diamond Sutra: transforming the way we perceive the world*, by Mu Soeng; Wisdom Publications (2000).

**16 - 18 Spring O-Higan Retreat. Topic: Gratitude.** This is an essential practice to a Buddhist life. The topic will be intertwined with study of the Heart Sutra as it relates to O-Higan and gratitude. We begin at 7:30 PM on Friday and conclude at 1 PM on Sunday. This retreat will be especially meaningful this year due to the anniversary of the Tohoku Disaster.

**18 Mahasangha Sunday Meditation Service and Refuge Ceremony, 10:30 AM.** Following the O-Higan Retreat we will conduct a regular meditation service and Refuge ceremony. If you have indicated an interest in taking refuge, now is the time to do it; let Monshin know no later than March 11th.

**22 From Cairo to Qatar: Jewish-Muslim Relations from One Rabbi's Perspective. 7:30 PM.** Rabbi Visotzky is the Appleman Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary. This Lecture is part of the Sidney and Albert Interfaith Lectureship series. It is held at the Hubbard Interfaith Sanctuary, 959 Madison Avenue, Albany, NY. For more information call [454-5250](tel:454-5250) or [spirituallife@strose.edu](mailto:spirituallife@strose.edu).

## Notes

**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.

### **Jushoku's Meanderings**

Tendai Buddhist Institute is making a minor change to its physical configuration. We want to keep everyone up to date about our humble temple.

During the last several months we have made plans to renovate the garage near the parking lot into a dormitory. The current garage is a 39" X 25" single story, insulated, wooden structure built on a slab foundation. There is no plumbing in the building, but it has electricity. The interior of the structure is completely open. The size of the building will not change.

The purpose of the renovation is simple. The current sleeping arrangements are barely adequate, sleeping quarters are tight and there is a great deal of wear and tear on this historic house. The garage is available and its conversion to sleeping quarters will reduce the burden on the main house and provide for more comfortable accommodations for retreat and gyo participants. The renovation of the garage into a dormitory is not intended to increase the number of people attending our sleepover events.

The plan is to renovate the interior into four rooms with interior walls. Each room will accommodate up to four people and will have a door to the outside. Dual-pane windows will be added for additional natural light. There will be no interior doors to adjoining rooms. Additionally, the interior wall of each room will have a built in o-shire (Japanese style cabinet to hold futon bedding and personal items). The people staying in the dormitory style facility will use the toilet and bathing facilities of the main house. Meals will also be taken in the main house, as they are currently.

The proposed plan is in compliance with the Building Code of New York State. The interior partitions will be fire rated and the windows and doors will meet the code's requirements for light, ventilation and egress. The building code permits toilet facilities to be located in adjacent buildings.

We have already submitted the necessary paperwork and met with the Town of Canaan, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Planning Board. Public hearings will be held on February 28th for the ZBA and March 19th for the Planning board. Both meetings are at 7 PM at the Canaan Town Hall. We do not anticipate any problems at either public hearing. The work is scheduled to start in mid-April and be finished in June.

Such a change may seem mundane. However, by making such changes we are better able to present our programs and offer our teachings to people from near and far. This small step is important to many people who join us for a single program or a lifetime.

Gassho . . . Monshin

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

*"I do hope that the very talented members of the sangha will take this opportunity to present the thoughts, words and images that reflect their practice,"*

Gassho

Peter



Gandhara exhibition

**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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