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Jushoku's Meanderings

Buddhism is not a religion, philosophy, or way of life that is intended to make you happy. The goal of happiness as an end in itself is a poor substitute for what Buddhism does offer. Buddhism is a search for the nature of reality. In so doing it is a collection of teachings to liberate sentient beings from *dukkha* (discontentedness, discomfort, anxiety, suffering) and methods of inspiring people to be compassionate (*karuna*) through wisdom (*prajna*), employing skillful or expedient means (*Upaya*). [\(cont.\)](#)



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

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March Events Calendar

Weekly Meditation Services 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

6 Stump the Sensei - Got questions about Buddhism that recently came up in your readings or as a result of our weekly discussion? Go for it. This is a time you can ask any question regarding Buddhism. Monshin will do his best to answer it. If you have a question, odds are that other people have a similar question.

13 Lotus Sutra Ch. 2: Tactfulness - This chapter provides a key teaching in Mahayana Buddhism, considered to be core to the sutra's message. The primary translations used will be from the Kosei and BDK editions.

20 Dhyānapāramitā- the fifth of the Six Paramitas or Six Perfections, we will examine this important practice (meditation) in recognition of O-Higan, which is from the 17th through the 23rd of March. It is customary to examine the Six Perfections during this time.

27 What is Buddhism III?- We are examining contemporary conceptions and misconceptions about the Buddha-dharma. Using the format in Faure's *Unmasking Buddhism* we examine various perceptions of Buddhism that abound in our postmodern milieu.

Other Events in March:

2 Sutra Class and Morning Service, 8:30 - 10:30 AM - From Ch. 1: *Interpreting the Lotus Sutra*, by Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone. Pp. 1-15. In Teiser, SF and Stone, J (eds.) (2009) *Readings of the Lotus Sutra*. Columbia University Press. **Please Note:** originally I thought we might be able to cover the first half of the chapter, but, upon reflection there are several natural breaks in the chapter and we should include the first four sections before we embark upon, 'Central Claims of the Lotus Sutra'.

22-24 Spring O-Higan Retreat - (Friday 7 PM - Sunday 1 PM). The Sanmitsu (trans. Three Mysteries, or Secrets) is at the base of many Tendai practices. On this retreat we will practice unifying body, speech and mind and will explore how the sanmitsu can be a means to transform our moment-to-moment experience in our everyday lives. Please sign up, let Shumon or Monshin know. This retreat is appropriate to all levels and there is a minimum and maximum number of people who can attend the retreat.

Please Note:

April 13th (Saturday) Tendai Buddhist Institute clean-up day from 9 AM through 2 PM.the Hondo. Lunch is included. Please bring gloves, rakes and other tools for landscape clean up. The rain day is the following day, April 14th. More details next month.

Meanderings (cont. from side bar at left)



The preceding statement is at odds with many books, articles and presentations that would have one think that Buddhism is a panacea to all that ails us physically, emotionally, and psychologically. It is a religion, a philosophy and way of life, that loses its dynamism when we try to turn it into a self-help program.

Delving deeply into Buddhist teachings and practices takes place when we choose to go beyond ideas of what we want Buddhism to be, or notions we accept uncritically. In the next few months we will be examining a book that will challenge many people's conceptions of what they think Buddhism is, or is not. We will examine an entertaining and elucidating book in several parts starting in April. The book is: Donald S Lopez, Jr. (2012) *The Scientific Buddha: His Short and Happy Life*. Yale University Press. It is short, easily read and direct.

The blurb on the book jacket:

"How Western notions of the Buddha have come to misrepresent his teachings and the traditional goals of Buddhist practice. This book tells the story of the scientific Buddha," born in Europe in the 1800s but commonly confused with the Buddha born in India 2,500 years ago. The scientific Buddha was sent into battle against Christian missionaries, who were proclaiming across Asia that Buddhism was a form of superstition. He proved the missionaries wrong, teaching a dharma that was in harmony with modern science. And his influence continues. Today the teaching of "mindfulness" is heralded as the cure for all manner of maladies, from depression to high blood pressure.

In this potent critique, a well-known chronicler of the West's encounter with Buddhism demonstrates how the scientific Buddha's teachings deviate in crucial ways from those of the far older Buddha of ancient India. Donald Lopez shows that the Western focus on the scientific Buddha threatens to bleach Buddhism of its vibrancy, complexity, and power, even as the superficial focus on "mindfulness" turns Buddhism into merely the latest self-help movement. The scientific Buddha has served its purpose, Lopez argues. It is now time for him to pass into Nirvana. This is not to say however that the teachings of the ancient Buddha must be dismissed as mere cultural artifacts. They continue to present a potent challenge, even to our modern world."

You can obtain it now and follow along. This is Buddhism at its most dynamic. One of the notes on the back cover by Janet Gyatso, Harvard University, reads "This edifying and often witty book is not only about busting myths. It also ventures what Buddhism - now purged of the apocryphal 'scientific Buddha' - might indeed teach the world today about altruism and the self."

The discussion that will accompany our reading is intended to bring a new, enhanced, understanding about our path toward awakening. The only preparation needed for engaging this material is an open *Kokoro* (heart/mind/spirit). Enjoy this sincere exploration of the sacred.

Gassho Monshin

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

Family Day at the Dharma Center

This is a monthly opportunity for families with small children to gather together, a Dharma school for the youngsters and a service with meditation for the parents. It usually starts at 10 AM - sometimes Saturday, sometimes Sunday so check your Shingi for details - and concludes with a pot-luck lunch. Buddhist Education Director Dr. Aaron Proffitt organizes and directs the children program, while Monshin or Koshin leads the parents in the services.

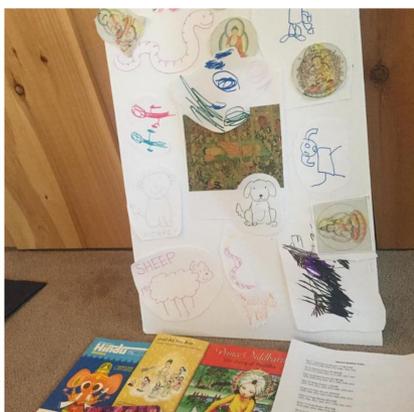
These gatherings are open to all sangha members who may wish to join in the meditation and potluck.



Family day in the hondo



First instruction



The Buddha in all beings



And a delicious family sharing

And as always, please do send us news from your sangha!
Your poetry, your images, your suggestions!
Gassho!