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June 2015

SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



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June is a busy month at Tendai Buddhist Institute / Tendai-shu New York Betsuin. As everyone knows we have the 10/20 year anniversary of our temple, and we have the Doshu/Soryo gyo taking place. That's a lot to do a short period of time. It seems the whole month in one way or another is

June 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.

June Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

3 The Buddhist Path - The Path of regular Steps and Irregular Steps - Buddhism as a lifestyle, as a philosophy, as a religion. What is the Buddhist Path as well as what it is not. This takes the form of a discussion rather than a lecture.

10 The Founding of the Tendai Buddhist Institute, Tendai-shu New York Betsuin Part. 2 - Last month we provided a glimpse of the Tendai Buddhist Institute origins, we will continue with the renovation of the hondo (sanctuary).

17 Dainichi Nyorai (Skt Vairocana or Maha Vairocana) - represents the pinnacle among Japan's esoteric sects. He is referred to as the 'Life Force That Illuminates the Universe'. Dainichi Nyorai is the embodiment of the 'Awareness of the Continuum of Reality' and the lord of the Tathagātha families. Please note: There will NOT be a pot-luck dinner this evening.

dedicated to sangha. Even the topics each Wednesday night, in its own way, has a sangha theme.

(cont.)



Quicklinks

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Our Other Sangha:

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

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

[California Tendai Buddhist Monastery](#)

[Tendai Denmark](#)

24 Sangha - The Buddhist Community - Personal reflections from gyoja and TBI sangha members. Please note there WILL be a pot-luck dinner this evening. Be sure to join us for an ordination of Doshu and celebration of the completion of the gyo.

Other Events in June:

6 Sangha Clean-up and prep for Anniversary Ceremony - from 9 AM - 3:00 PM - There is grounds work as well as sundry tasks and jobs to prepare for the large celebration we will hold on June 13th. Join us for the day or for a morning or afternoon. A light lunch will be provided. We would like to give a special thank you to the people who joined us in April for Spring cleanup.

13 9 AM - 3:00 PM - 10/20th Anniversary Observance. This is the 20th anniversary of Tendai Buddhist Institute and the 10th anniversary of the consecration of our Hondo. We start with a formal *Tokodo* (ordination ceremony) for Koshin Karl Bower and Shingaku Jenny Henderson. After this ceremony they will be registered in Japan This is followed by a formal anniversary observance ceremony that will be performed by 33 Japanese Tendai monks, including Kobori-sensei the Executive Director of Enryakuji and Yamada-sensei Abbot of Chusonji, and a dozen or more locally trained monks. A tasty lunch will be served and all are welcome, but please RSVP if you plan to attend.

15 -24 Doshu/Soryo Gyo - will take place during this period. At this time the Tendai Buddhist Institute becomes a monastic training center. Until the middle of the 20th century the regional head temples in Japan were periodically given over to this function. Now virtually all men and women who train to be monks/priests complete at least the *Gegyo* portion (the exoteric phase) of their training at the *Gyoin* (training institute) on Mt. Hiei, while the *Shido Kegyo* (esoteric phase) may be conducted by their Shisho (Master) at his/her temple, or at the Mt. Hiei Gyoin.

15 - 24 Morning Meditation; 7-8 AM. Each morning during the gyo there will be an open mediation. There will be no service at this time only the meditation. Join us each day to inspire your practice and join the gyo participants for this daily meditation, usually led by Monshin.

Notes and Announcements:

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

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

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

Judi Croft is coordinating the salads and desserts for the upcoming 10/20 Anniversary Ceremony lunch. Please contact Judi at judicroft.z(at)gmail.com and let her know if you are going to bring a desert or salad to the event lunch. Please note to use @ for (at) in Judy's address.

Food Pantry at Jiunzan Tendai-ji - 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)



When Shumon and I returned to the states from Japan, now over 20 years ago, it was our explicit intentioned to create sangha. As many have heard me say, 'in the West those who claim to be Buddhists pay a great deal of attention to Buddha and Dharma, but Sangha is often given short shrift. From the time of Shakyamuni Buddha sangha was not an afterthought, or a later development, it was essential to the teachings of the Buddha dharma..

We know that in the last 50 years institutions, especially religious ones, are less and less important in people's lives. Indeed traditional religion has become marginalized. Individualism is the purported highest good. From this perspective going it alone in spirituality allows one the greatest freedom. I assert that it is a false freedom, a delusion that one is not connected to any other, within society or the cosmos. I need not point out that this is antithetical to Buddhist teachings

From the Pali canon we read of the importance of the sangha:

"As he was sitting there, Ven. Ananda said to the Blessed One, "This is half of the holy life, lord: admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie."

"Don't say that, Ananda. Don't say that. Admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & comrades, he can be expected to develop & pursue the noble eightfold path."

Excerpt from the Upaddha Sutta, AN 8.54

Sangharakshita writes eloquently about the spiritual community. He writes first that a sangha, or spiritual community, is not like other communities of friends and acquaintances.

Within the spiritual community we want to develop spiritually and others want to develop spiritually; they have gone for refuge and we have gone for refuge. Therefore we relate on the basis of our common commitment in our common ideal: our highest common concern. If we relate to others in this way then we experience them as we do not usually experience them: we experience them as spiritual beings. Because we experience others as spiritual beings we experience ourselves too as spiritual beings. Because we each experience ourselves as spiritual beings, the pace of spiritual development is accelerated and we experience ourselves more and more truly and intensely.¹

Practically, Sangha are the institutions that have preserved the teachings and lineages. They provide a literal refuge - a place to practice, to study, to meditate, to retreat. A sangha is not a club, association, or assembly. A sangha is the connection between those who have consciously chosen to follow the Buddhist Path not as a hobby or merely for self-interest. It is the lifeblood of the Buddhist Path, a place of nourishment, reflection, harmony and intention.

Join us this month in celebration, observance, and commitment to sangha. Join us as we tread the Path toward awakening - together.

Love and Gassho... Monshin

[1]¹ Sangharakshita (1990) A Guide to the Buddhist Path. Windhorse Publications. P. 106

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

The Waves do Sail Into and from the Sea

If we are waves upon the ocean
we would hope to sail within a tiny sea
amid the many small swells coursing with the wind,
as if the coves and bays were an ocean unto themselves.
There is no end to them.
Sail within them without an anchor
for they are of the ocean, as you.

If we are waves upon the ocean
there will be another gentle wave
to later follow the one you miss,
now well beyond the horizon of your seeing.

There is no end to them. Sail with them in gentleness.
for they are of the ocean, as you.

If we are waves upon the ocean,
there will be another huge, dark breaker
to later follow the one that nearly absorbed you.
There is no end to them.
Sail gently around them with a tiller
guided neither by hate nor fear
for they are of the ocean, as you.

If we are waves upon the ocean,
the rains will fall to it,
the mists will rise from it.
There is no end to them.
Sail between them both,
for they are of the ocean, as you.

If we are waves upon the ocean,
all the tears that ever fell
came from the space between
the swells of every sea
whose beautiful shimmerings
are the rise and fall of waves
that stand to see one to the other,
and are yet of the ocean, as you

-Kosei Michael Sanders April 2015



Dharma Drum
by David Rubin

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact . . .

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