

Ginza Ginza Ginza Ginza Ginza

By Alexa Tang

This summer we marked a very special milestone—our 70th Ginza Holiday Festival! Year after year, Ginza brings our Sangha together in joyful work and warm hospitality, and this year was no exception.

More photos and highlights from our steamy summer festival. See pages 6–11.

Incredibly, close to 175 Sangha members and friends supported Ginza 2025. If we take a conservative estimate of eight volunteer

hours per person, that adds up to more than 1,400 combined hours of service. From setting up tents and preparing food, to greeting guests and cleaning up at the end of each day, every hour contributed made a difference.

This year also brought record-setting weather, with temperatures climbing as high as 94 degrees. Even in the

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Photo by Nakai Photography

Record-setting heat, with temperatures climbing as high as 94 degrees, didn't prevent the Ginza Holiday Festival show from going on—nor festival-goers from taking it all in.



president's message

Seasons change. So does MBT

By Jason Matsumoto

Obon and Ginza have come and gone. I am very thankful for all of your efforts to help MBT put on such meaningful events. Each of your contributions is felt across our Sangha, and the impact of our collective efforts ripple into our broader community. It is always such a pleasure to run into friends and

fellow Sangha members, old and new, at these two important summer events.

At the same time, I cannot believe summer is already coming to a close. The other day, I watched a band of kids walk past our house with new backpacks and that unmistakable “back-to-school” energy. And on my way to the office this week, my

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'I am, because of you'

Rev. Todd Tsuchiya speaks about “ubuntu.”

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Learning and growing

Dharma School's back for '25-'26 school year.

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happenings

By Elaine Matsushita

Chicagoans are fortunate to have the chance to see the documentary **"Third Act"** from filmmaker **Tadashi Nakamura**. The film—a personal documentary that is, according to *Variety*, "both a searing historical record and a poignant father-son narrative"—will be shown at 2 pm Sunday, Sept. 7, at the Chicago History Museum.

Generations of artists call **Robert A. Nakamura** "the godfather of Asian American media," but Tad Nakamura calls him Dad. What begins as a documentary about his father's career takes a turn with a Parkinson's Disease diagnosis, and evolves into an exploration on art, activism, grief and fatherhood.

"I think the film really speaks to the intergenerational relationships and dynamics within our community and families," says **Tad Nakamura**.

The screening will be followed by a conversation with **Nakamura, Lisa Doi** and **traci kato-kiriyama**.

Tickets for the screening and post-screening conversation are \$10; free for Chicago History Museum members. The Chicago History Museum is at 1730 N Stockton Dr. For more information and to buy tickets to the screening, visit this [link](#).

You can get a sneak peak at "Third Act" by clicking this [link to the trailer](#).



Kick it out

The Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, as part of its interactive **TEATALKS** workshops, will hold a Kickboxing & Mental Health session at 2 pm

Sunday, Sept. 14 at 9Round in Schaumburg.

TEATALKS, launched in collaboration with **Dr. Ken Kikuchi**, clinical director of Kenko Interventions, are designed to destigmatize

Clockwise from top left: The documentary "Third Act" will be shown at the Chicago History Museum on Sept. 7; Grady Hutt and his Cold Motions band take the stage at the Montrose Saloon; Gary Tsuchiyama, Greg and Nancy Rivera and Ken Kadoyama man the MBT parking lot during the Chicago Air & Water Show.

psychotherapy and mental illness while connecting Asian Americans with culturally competent mental health resources. They blend traditional cultural practices with effective therapeutic tools to offer a welcoming space to promote emotional well-being.

At this session, **Asayo Hoichi**, owner of Mindful Professional Counseling and **Mark Yasuoka**, owner of 9Round Fitness-Schaumburg, will show how kickboxing, see *happenings*, page 16

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Don't forget to visit our website, mbtchicago.org, for more information about Shin Buddhism and the Midwest Buddhist Temple.



Photo illustration from themighty.com

'I am, because of you'

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Aug. 3, 2025.

By Rev. Todd Tsuchiya

This is the monthly memorial service for the month of August. It is an opportunity to remember, with gratitude, those family members and friends who have gone before us.

In the Jodo Shinshu tradition, the memorial service is not for the benefit of the deceased, it is for us—to come together to hear the Dharma and to give a spiritual offering through the chanting of sutras, the singing of songs, the recitation of readings and being together as a Sangha.

It is a time to reflect upon our lives and express appreciation and gratitude for the many benefits we have received from those who passed away and how we are continually being influenced by them.

In Japanese, these monthly services are called “Shotsuki Hoyo” which means joyous month. It’s joyous because, through this act of attending the Shotsuki Service and remembering our family members and friends, we can say that it is the person who passed away that has called us together and is giving us the opportunity to

listen to the teachings of the Buddha. It is their gift to us.

Today, I would like to talk about the World Parliament of Religions gathering that I attended at McCormick Place two summers ago. It was a gathering of over 8,000 people representing over 210 countries and 95-plus traditions. The theme was “A Call to Conscience: Defending Freedom & Human Rights.”

Rev. Ron and Rev. Nakai were panelists for a Buddhist/Catholic dialogue presentation that I was able to attend. I also attended a session called Ubuntu. This is a South African concept meaning: “I am, because of you.” Or, “people are not people without other people.” I think this is an important concept to understand on this monthly memorial service as we honor our loved ones. We stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, and we would not be who we are without them.

Ubuntu is the capacity to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interest of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring. It is a philosophy that supports collectivism over individualism.

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Striving to live the bodhisattva ideal

This is an essay written as part of the Jodo Shinshu International Office's two-year correspondence course—a course to gain a deeper knowledge of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

By Grady Hutt

How do you understand the relationship between seeking spiritual awakening for oneself and the practice of helping others on the bodhisattva path of Mahayana Buddhism?

I’ve always felt a stronger connection to the Mahayana traditions over the Theravada.

Theravada traditions feel more exotic and romantic, as well as more rigorous and, for many of us, impractical.

I view the Path of the Sages (Theravada) as out of reach for me. It’s a lovely idea to dedicate your life to the Sangha and perfecting wisdom, but I’m not going to renounce my family.

In my youth I had considered taking the vows and become a monk. I was never able to fully commit to that life, perhaps the hooks of attachment are too deeply entrenched in me. I still have immense respect for those who follow the Path of Sages and believe there is legitimate need for their work

and sacrifice. I view it similarly to a secular idea; it would be wonderful if we were all philosophers but sometimes you just need a plumber to fix your sink.

We can’t all renounce our active participation in the world, particularly here in the West.

I suppose it could be more attractive if we had a society here that would support this lifestyle, but the fact is we do not. We still need monks, we still need philosophers. We still need people who are dedicated to virtue, to wisdom and to compassion. We look to these

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ubuntu

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Ubuntu is also a responsibility that each person holds. It speaks to our interconnectedness, our common humanity and the responsibility to each other that flows from our deeply felt connection. Ubuntu affirms our fellow human beings and to work and act toward each other with communal good in our minds.

I have a musician friend whom I grew up with in Minnesota. I recently read a social media post of his and the joy he felt with a grandchild being born. He spoke of a Hebrew/Yiddish word—*Nachas*.

What makes the word *nachas* special is that it refers to a kind of joy, which is derived from the happiness of others. I think this describes Ubuntu.

In Buddhism, Ubuntu can be thought of as interdependence. The world is so polarized these days with politicians instilling fear in us to be afraid of the other.

However, our humanness is even reflected in those we most vehemently disagree with—they, too, have their own karmic past. To react to this pain with the unskillful energies of anger and fear diminishes the positive collective energy we create together.

I also think Ubuntu is related to what we chant at the end of every sutra. We chant what is called Eko, or transfer of merit. The Eko we usually chant was written by Shantao, the 5th Pure Land master from China. This is the translation:

*I vow that the virtue of this truth
Be given equally to all.
May they awaken the bodhi mind
And realize the realm of peace and joy.*

We can interpret the Eko we chant as the act of lifting others.

As Shin Buddhists, we understand this merit transference comes from the compassionate activity of Amida Buddha. When you understand the meaning of this Eko, it is a wonderful aspiration to wish all to become awakened without exception.

As Shin Buddhists, we can think of this as Great Compassion from Amida Buddha. Amida is the dynamic spiritual power manifesting as wisdom and compassion that I am made aware of in the ordinary experience of my daily life.

Ubuntu sees community or sangha rather than self-determination as the essential aspect of personhood. Our well-being is deeply tied to the well-being of others. Joy is shared, pain is shared. Ubuntu asks us to open our hearts and to share. It is the true meaning of empathy. In our self-centered, competitive western society, this is difficult for us to do.

There is a story of a European anthropologist who unintentionally inspired the living philosophy of Ubuntu. The



Ubuntu is “the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world, it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievement of others.”

—Nelson Mandela

anthropologist was studying a Zulu tribe in Southern Africa in the 1960s. He invited the children of the village to play a game. The children were to line up and, upon his signal, run the 100 yards to where he stood. Whoever reached the anthropologist first would receive a big bag of sweets.

The children were of various ages and sizes. Some carried a sibling or held hands with a younger one; many had challenging abilities due to injury or birth. But they all lined up, and the signal was given.

At first, a few of the children jumped and ran ahead. But after a few yards, they stopped, looked back, and rejoined the line. Then the children all locked arms and walked and ran until they reached the destination together.

The researcher was baffled as the children laughed with glee, sharing the contents of the bag.

Scratching his head in amazement, he stopped to ask one of the little girls, “Why did you all come together? One person could have had it all.”

Amazed at his thinking, she responded, “We believe this is how we should be.” In our self-centered, competitive culture in the US, that seems unthinkable.

The late Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president, said that Ubuntu is “the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world, it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievement of others.”

And South African Bishop Desmond Tutu

says, “A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished.”

Ubuntu is the essence of being human. It speaks of how my humanity is caught up and bound up inextricably with yours. It says—not as Descartes did, saying “I think, therefore I am”—but rather “I am because I belong.” We need other human beings in order to be human.

President Barack Obama is quoted as saying that Ubuntu is the recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us.

To express this using Buddhist terms, we might say that everyone has Buddha Nature. It is like how the Buddha sees the world, not the distinctions humans make of good and bad, worthy and unworthy. It is like the Third Vow made by Amida Buddha: That everyone has the color of gold.

It doesn't mean everyone is the same, but that everyone has high value.

In the collective consciousness we get to experience the deepest part of our humanity through our interactions with others. This is what Jodo Shinshu practice is all about. Jodo Shinshu is a lived tradition learning from each other.

We can think of this as the gesture of gassho and reciting Namo Amida Butsu. It is the understanding that we are connected to all of life.

As we become more aware, we try to live each moment fully with deep appreciation for all beings. This makes us more humble, and we will naturally work for the betterment of all beings.

When we realize we are not at the center, gratitude flows naturally from us as a recognition of our interdependence. We are just one part in a web of abundant connections. Gratitude helps us to see how we are constant receivers.

When we understand we are not the center, we recognize we are supported by things we know and don't know that sustain us.

We cannot live without other people and things. If we can understand this truth, we cannot help but be humble and appreciate others. The Ubuntu spirit is to regard yourself as connected to others.

The Buddhist idea of dependent origination says that all things do not arise of themselves. They are all due to causes and conditions.

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ubuntu

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This is expressed in the Japanese phrase *okagesama*. *Okagesama* means benefiting from your shade. It can also be translated as “I am because you are.” It is the understanding that I would not be here without all the support seen and unseen that I have received from so many. These include the people whom we are honoring today in this memorial service.

Even if you don’t know any of the names on the list, causes and conditions have brought us together today. This is the dynamic working of karma.

Okagesama expresses the inconceivable karmic sources and universal truths behind my experiences. It is humbling understanding that there are so many causes and conditions that have contributed to my path and coming to the realization that Amida’s unconditional Vow embraces me and helps me understand my existence.

Through Amida’s light, I am reminded to see the other power surrounding me. It gives me a great deal of comfort and joy in my life of Namo Amida Butsu.

I recently watched a film that is a tribute to two pioneers of taiko who started the San Jose Taiko group—Roy and PJ Hirabayashi. Those of you who are familiar with the taiko community are aware of what they have done to advance taiko and made it a household word.

The film is titled “Because of You, I Am.” The origin of the title is based on the

concept of *okagesama*. This is loosely translated as “because you came before me, I am who I am.”

Too often we overlook or take things we cannot see for granted. *Okagesama* helps us to reconnect to these karmic sources and universal truths. The phrase, *okagesama*, humbles us to realize that we cannot exist on our own.

When we say Namo Amida Butsu, it is the calling voice of the Buddha, it is the Buddha’s command to us to wake up.

A Jodo Shinshu Buddhist practice is sometimes referred to as deep listening or hearing the Nembutsu. Living a life of Nembutsu is not about what I can do but understanding what I am the recipient of. This is changing our perspective of the directionality of benefit. It is *okagesama* and Ubuntu which helps me to understand that even though I may feel alone and isolated right now during so much turmoil in the world, I would not be here without all the support seen and unseen that I have received from so many.

By realizing this, it changes us and how we act.

We can learn a great deal from nature about Ubuntu. If you want to remember how incredible this planet is, go outside into nature. Unlike social media and the news, nature has no incentive to keep us agitated, angry and anxious.

I mentioned this before in a previous Dharma talk that I watched a Netflix documentary called “Fantastic Fungi.” Fungi have a partnership with plants and trees. Fungi serve as a communication

network among plants that allows them to warn each other about insect infestations and to share nutrients.

According to some researchers, trees and the mushrooms growing around them are so interconnected that in many ways they aren’t separate entities. They can’t live without each other.

Redwoods are another example. They are very tall, but their roots are very shallow. They cannot exist without the support of each other.

Ubuntu encompasses the interdependence of humans on another but just as important, the acknowledgment of one’s responsibility to our fellow humans and the world around them. On this occasion of the monthly memorial service, we should know there is no division between human and human, or human and nature, or human and Buddha. All things are moving away from fragmentation to wholeness.

Both Ubuntu and Buddhist interdependence are ideas that provoke an awareness of the interwovenness of this web called life and what it means to be a human being in relationship with all sentient beings. This is living a life of Namo Amida Butsu.

Please join me in gassho as I read a quote from Martin Luther King that speaks to Ubuntu and our connection with each other: *“In a real sense, all life is interrelated. All people are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be...”*

bodhisattva

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people to help us navigate the world and our place in it.

I have had people share with me their thoughts that walking the monastic path is selfish, and I disagree. While a Theravada practitioner works on perfecting their self to achieve Nirvana in this life, I don’t believe that, at the core, they do this for themselves and only for themselves. There is much to emulate from a peaceful, monastic life—not just receiving teachings.

We can all strive to live in harmony with our world, to show compassion for all living beings, and to practice dana whenever possible.

Mahayana traditions introduce the idea of the bodhisattva. This being works tirelessly to liberate all living beings in the universe, and postpones their own liberation until their goal is achieved.

I strive to live the bodhisattva ideal. I don’t think I have the ego to presume that I am one, but I work to make the choices that a bodhisattva would.

Even those of us who may not have the desire to become one may be acting in accordance with the ideals of a bodhisattva. As the historical Buddha believed that we are all deep down full of Buddha nature,

I think this ends up manifesting itself in myriad ways in our life. It could be as simple as allowing a car to merge in front of you on the freeway, it could be spending time volunteering. It could be including others in nightly prayers, or wishing everyone health and happiness while meditating.

These moments to me are little rays of Buddha nature coming out, little moments of bodhisattva action.

They occur daily, a million little blessings by a million little anonymous people. This idea truly fills my heart with optimism and gratitude, for while things can certainly be bleak, there are a thousand small miracles occurring every moment of every day.

Fundamental to Mahayana Buddhism is the inclusion of others. The Greater Vehicle indeed can carry more people across to the other shore. In Mahayana traditions, it is simply not enough to perfect yourself and enjoy the fruits of Nirvana. This feels like a

common misconception about Mahayana Buddhism—it’s much more accessible but that does not mean it is an easier.

You have an obligation, a responsibility to others. You must live each day understanding how we are all interconnected and how important it is for everyone to thrive. When one suffers, we all suffer.

Mahayana Buddhism offers a unique and compelling alternative to the self-obsessed capitalistic culture we find ourselves in. Baked into the DNA of the Mahayana approach is community and equanimity. We are kidding ourselves if we think we achieve anything alone, and the Mahayana traditions gently and consistently remind us that we are only here due to the countless sacrifices made by others that we will never know.

It is overwhelming to think how many people have worked tirelessly so I can write this essay. Mahayana traditions remind us to be grateful for all that we have received, and we should do our absolute best to include others as we continue rolling this wheel of dana.



Unless credited otherwise, all photos by
MBT volunteers Nicole Sumida, Heather Ichishita
Nobuhata, Rich Taura, Josh Fidler, Andrea Shlimon
and Sue Romano



Photos of taiko and
Rev. Todd by Nakai
Photography



ginza

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heat, our volunteers showed amazing spirit and stayed committed to serving our guests with the same care and dedication as always.

The effort was well worth it—we welcomed nearly 3,000 visitors to the temple grounds and served over 3,000 chicken teriyaki dinners (that's more than one per guest).

Shave ice was especially popular this year, breaking sales records in step with the record heat.

Our food booths also saw exciting changes. We piloted a new menu item: tofu don. The addition required extra creativity and flexibility, from planning through execution, as our teams worked around new regulations and refrigerator

challenges. Thanks to everyone's teamwork, the tofu don was a success and gave guests another taste of MBT hospitality.

As always, Ginza would not be complete without the Waza artisans from Japan and their display and demonstration of traditional Japanese arts. We were honored to welcome several returning artisans this year: ceramist Eiji Kinoshita from Oita Prefecture, Masahiro Kawakami, a third-generation maker of tenugui (hand-painted cotton cloth) from Tokyo Prefecture, and Yuzo Mouri, a third-generation bamboo craftsman from Oita Prefecture. Making her first Ginza appearance was candle artist Hiroko Shima from Oita Prefecture, whose work drew much admiration.

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Photos of Albert Sora and chicken grillers by Nakai Photography



ginza

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In addition to delicious food and traditional crafts, this year's Ginza also celebrated its rich history. Reaching the 70th festival is an incredible milestone, and to mark the occasion we created commemorative Ginza T-shirts in multiple colors. They became a symbol of the tradition and legacy of Ginza at Midwest Buddhist Temple, and a keepsake of our Sangha's shared efforts.

Looking back, what stands out most about Ginza is not only the numbers—thousands of guests served, hundreds of volunteers, record sales and heat—but the spirit of

collaboration and community, that makes the festival possible. Each person who gave their time, energy, and care contributed to something far greater than any one of us could do alone.

Thank you to every volunteer, supporter, and guest who helped make the 70th Ginza Holiday Festival such a success. Together, we continue to carry forward the tradition of Ginza as a gift to our community and a reflection of our Sangha's shared values.

Note: This year's Ginza Coordinating Committee was led by Dana Johnson, Jason Matsumoto, Kristin Park, Alexa Tang and Kiku Taura. The temple is grateful for their leadership.



Photos of Waza artisans by Nakai Photography





Photos of kitchen workers, tofu don and tofu don workers (below) by Nakai Photography





Photos of raffle workers, Jesse Zavala, Jerry Matsumoto and chicken teriyaki packaging team by Nakai Photography



2025 Ginza raffle winners

\$1,000 / Robert Farrell

Ron Wat

\$500 / Mickey Hamano

Chicago Teahouse \$50 Gift Card, plus a tin of Windy City tea / Karen Kaliyadan

\$300 / Dr. Ken Sakamoto

Kamehachi \$75 Gift Card / Roy Yamamoto

Gaijin 5-Course Dinner for 2 curated by Chef Paul Virant, including beverage pairings. (Estimated value: \$230) / Tina Hagio

Osteria Via Stato 2 \$25 Gift Cards / Amy Erb

Yokocho Handrolls and Omakase Bar, \$100 Gift Card / Nick Macri

Orso's Italian Restaurant / Burt Fujishima

Sushi Dokku \$100 Gift Card / Mickey Hamano

Osteria Via Stato 2 \$25 Gift Cards / Chris Gamez

Kamehachi \$75 Gift Card /

Lou Malnati's Pizza \$25 Gift Certificate / Mary Pat Walsh



What makes Ginza so truly amazing, you ask?

By Carl Ichikawa

Here are a few things observed at our 70th Ginza Holiday Festival that make this event so wonderful. Names have been omitted as their actions were reflective of all.

- The stage program emcee whose enthusiasm added to the amazing performances.
- The energy during the taiko shows was electric, and you could feel the power and focus of those playing the odaiko.
- Unsung heroes were those collecting the garbage and refilling the worker water jugs.
- There's an unseen group who quietly manage the festival accounting in real time.
- One of our nisei temple members was spotted being pushed in her wheelchair by her grandson—a snapshot of Ginza's legacy.
- A gentleman stopped by the information booth to retrieve his lost wallet. His relief—and gratitude—were obvious.
- A woman was walking near the high-boy tables when she bent down to pick up a random napkin ring from the ground. Love our guests!
- The hondo offered a respite from the noise and heat, along with a cheerful greeting.
- We have a loyal group of vendors who support us, many local but one traveling all the way from San Diego. Thank you!
- The amazing amount and variety of workers' food, all generously donated by—the workers!
- Wonder how all those pots, pans, trays, racks and everything else get washed? Stop by the kitchen after closing to see the army of volunteers.
- We are grateful to those on the grill and parboiling for enduring the heat but the hottest spot may be the rice cooking in the kitchen with all that steam.
- As cleanup began, a boy no older than 6 was carrying a chair toward the back door. After redirecting him to the stack of chairs, he says, "Thank you." Kudos to that kid and his parents.
- The stage was being dismantled and two young kids were right there helping. A fond memory of our youth when we did the same with our dads at the old church on North Park Avenue.
- It takes days to transform the parking lot into Ginza. We closed on Sunday at 4 pm and by 5:30 pm, most was taken down—amazing!



Photos by Nakai Photography

MBT Bulletin 11

Dharma School's back for '25-'26 school year

By Jennifer Toguri

We're excited to welcome everyone back for a brand new year of Dharma School at MBT! Classes will be held October through May, and our students will once again have the special opportunity to help lead services.

We would also appreciate help from the Sangha to assist with classes and events—please reach out!

Dharma School is a fun and meaningful way for kids to learn about Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism. Through stories, art, music and kindness projects, we'll explore the

history of our tradition, rituals and the holidays we celebrate together.

It's not just about learning—it's also about growing. Dharma School gives kids the chance to make friends, discover their own voices, and share the Dharma in creative and heartfelt ways.

We welcome children of all ages, and we'd love for both new and returning families to join us for this year!

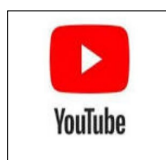
Want to learn more or sign up?

Look for announcements in the weekly email. Or contact the temple office at office@mbtchicago.org.

You can listen to Dharma talks on MBT's YouTube channel

Did you know that MBT has a YouTube channel? We do! You can view over 150 of our [videos](https://www.youtube.com/@mbtchicago435) at: [youtube.com/@mbtchicago435](https://www.youtube.com/@mbtchicago435) (also find links on our home page and our Online Dharma Talks page at our [website](https://www.mbtchicago.org).)

On our channel, you'll find Dharma Talks, special music videos and some great videos of Ginza Holiday Memories. If you have an idea for video



content you'd like to see on our channel, just drop us a line at webadmin@mbtchicago.org.

So check out our channel and become a subscriber by clicking the "Subscribe" button. If you hit the bell icon, you will be notified when we post new content.

September memorials

On the first Sunday of each month, the Midwest Buddhist Temple holds a collective Monthly Memorial Service during the regular Sunday Family Service, when loved ones can be remembered and honored.

Although memorial services are held in memory of a loved one who has passed away, the purpose of the memorial service is for us, the living, the ones who remain behind. The memorial service provides an opportunity to express appreciation and gratitude for the many benefits we have received from the person who passed away. These are the names of temple friends who have passed away in September, and who we will remember during the MBT service on Sept. 7.

September			
1933	Kesataro Ichikawa	1997	Amy Dianne Kaihara
1938	Masu Hiraiwa		Dick Kodani
1950	Torano Sugano	2000	Elsie S. Kaihara
1951	Riyo Yoshida		Yeko Shishida
1956	Masuyo Nagao		Earlene Hardimon
1958	Ken Takaki	2001	Eiko Ono
1960	Une Hirano	2002	Harriet Kawaguchi
1961	Yoneji Kataoka	2003	Diane Guerriero
1962	Kiichi Kusatsu		Jennie Ogata
	Mitsuhiko Taketa	2006	John Uehara
1963	Kotama Kawachi	2009	Memi Asakura
1965	Keiichi Kunisada		Jean Setsuko Tahara
1968	Toku Fujii		Kari Morita
1970	Sakuye Kinoshita		Charles Endo
1972	Hisao Sakumura	2010	Emi Jane Shiozaki
	Katsumi Suzuki		Taro Mukai
1973	Hsi Hong Chen	2013	Jerry Burgdoerfer
	Mitsuru Nishioka	2014	Tomiko Ishikawa
1978	Paul Kiyoshi Tahara	2015	Vicky Ito
	Yukie Takaki		Fred Yamaguchi
1979	Chiyoka Nihei	2017	Chiyeko Edith Tsuji
1980	Shi Chong Chen	2019	George Ichishita
1981	Hisa Hikida		Alice Yoshiko Sato
	Ken Ishikawa		Kazuko Jane Yaguchi
1984	Hisano Ito		Yayeko Adachi
1985	Chizuko De Silva	2020	Donna K. Kamihana
	Kaname Yamamoto		Tsune Nakagawa
1986	Mary Ellen Kitagawa	2021	
1989	Tom T. Chikaraishi		
1990	Fumio Kodama		
1992	Setsuko Hakariya		
1993	Kazuo Tsunemura		
1994	Mary Naito		
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president

Continued from page 1

commute has also been unmistakably longer. We are definitely approaching fall.

Along with the seasonal change, a major change will come to MBT. As you know, Rev. Todd and Connie will move back to Minnesota in the middle of September. Rev. Todd's final Dharma talk as MBT's resident minister will be on Sept. 7, 2025. We will miss the Tsuchiyas presence and, of course, it will be a sad day when we must say goodbye.

But they will not be far, and I have been quietly excited that both Rev. Todd and Connie have told us that they want to stay involved in MBT and continue to support from afar.

You might see Connie hosting an MBT service on Zoom once in a while, and we'll certainly schedule Rev. Todd to offer Dharma talks in the future—whether virtually or back in MBT's hondo. This is not goodbye, but rather a different arrangement with two people who are inextricably linked to our Sangha.

The MBT Board of Trustees continues to stay in close communication with Bishop Marvin Harada about potential candidates for MBT's next resident minister. There are no updates to report yet, but we remain hopeful that there is good news on the horizon.

In the meantime, I am excited to announce that we have further developed a plan to continue to deliver uninterrupted weekly Dharma messages and other religious services to our Sangha. Rev. Ron, whom we are so grateful to have here locally, will act as MBT's



This is not goodbye to Rev. Todd and Connie, but rather a different arrangement with two people who are inextricably linked to our Sangha.

part-time minister, overseeing all aspects of MBT's religious offerings. It is hard to put into words Rev. Ron's, and by close extension, Elaine's, dedication to MBT. The Miyamuras have every right to enjoy Ron's retirement and "sail into the sunset," but they have together chosen that Rev. Ron will come out of retirement to ensure MBT will serve its community through this transitional period.

And even so, it is incumbent upon us to alleviate as much work as possible from Rev. Ron's plate. We have built the Service Planning Committee ("SPC")—a small and mighty team that will manage all of the many operational details that go into weekly service planning.

These details include things like: staffing the service tech team (Zoom host, in-house AV operator), communicating with weekly readers, managing logistics with guest speakers, preparing the service slides and printed programs, coordinating with Dharma School leaders,

and coordinating with MBT's Minister Assistants, as well as musical accompanists. Rev. Todd took care of nearly all of these details during his tenure, and it speaks volumes that we have built a team of five people to cover this work.

The advisers to the SPC will be Rev. Ron and Roger Suekama, the MBT board's Religious Department chair. The initial members who have agreed to a one-year term will be Terry Cichocki, Tracie Padal, Grady Hutt, Alex Vincer and Joy Zavala.

It is the intention of the board to give the SPC a long enough runway to try things out. And eventually, we intend to rotate SPC members so that more people across the Sangha can support MBT through this important committee. Please help me to thank these initial members of the committee.

A very special thank you is in order for our outstanding office manager, Taryn Hutt. During Rev. Todd's medical leave, Taryn

stepped in to cover many of the logistical service planning tasks that the SPC will shortly take on, learning from Rev. Todd and learning by doing these tasks alongside Rev. Ron. Rev. Todd, Rev. Ron, and Taryn were the core builders of this new SPC structure. To that end, Taryn will also sit in on all matters SPC-related for a short period as the committee finds its footing.

I am so hopeful about the SPC structure. The rotating-member model offers a sustainable way to engage our Sangha members in a very important support role as we enter a period without a full-time resident minister. But even beyond this period, the SPC will build a model for the future sustainability of MBT's weekly Dharma offering, providing a new way for Sangha members to actively engage by directly supporting our ministers.

As with any new idea and new process, it will take many tries to get this right. The kinks must be worked out, and I thank this first cohort of SPC members as they embark on this exciting new project. Each of us can do our part to support the SPC. Timely responses to their outreach, eager volunteerism for a service role, or a simple "job well done" pat on the back—all of it will go a long way as we enter this transitional period as a team with a common goal.

Seasonal change is coming. And along with it, a major change for MBT. We look ahead from where we stand not with fear or anxiety, but with a plan and a measured degree of excitement for what is possible.

What fun it is to embrace the change that permeates our lives and constantly swirls around us. We can do this!

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What is Buddhism? What do you believe in?

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on July 20, 2025.

By Rev. Roger Suekama

This morning I have a question for you. You may have been asked this in the past but unsure as to what to say. The question is: What is Buddhism—or more specific, what do you believe in.

It is a simple question, and we may have different answers.

You may say Buddhism is the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama who was born in India around 560 BCE.

You may also say that he was the only son of a noble family, and his parents were told by a Brahman spiritual leader that he would either be a great king or a spiritual leader. Wishing to have his son become a great leader, his father sheltered his son inside the walls of the palace. When he was 29, he went out beyond the walls of the palace to see what the rest of the world looked like.

He found through the first gate, an old man and he asked his servant who he was. The servant said that this man is old and aging—a natural part of life.

Siddhartha then went out a second gate and saw a sick man. Again Siddhartha asked why this man was sick. His servant said that this also part of nature and sickness could strike anyone no matter the status of the individual.

The third gate led him to witness a funeral. His servant said this is also a reality of life, and no one is immune to this fact.

At the fourth gate, Siddhartha came upon a holy man who had renounced worldly pleasures in search of spiritual truth. This caused Siddhartha to question the meaning of life and the nature of suffering and existence.

Siddhartha then decided to seek the truth of suffering and left his family and his worldly possessions to seek the path of enlightenment. He first tried to seek truth through practicing extreme forms of self-denial to find spiritual knowledge. But he was unable to find the path to true enlightenment.

After six years, he found the path of moderation or the middle path, which led him to enlightenment and to become a Buddha.

As we recite the Three Treasures, we understand this is the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu. I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Dharma. I take refuge in the Sangha.

Now let's get back to the original question: As a Buddhist, what do you believe in?

There are over 70 Buddhist organizations just in the Chicago area, and they all have their roots in the original story of Siddhartha Gautama. But their form of practice may be very different.

If you say you are a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, what does that mean?

First, we again must start at the beginning—when Siddhartha Gautama found enlightenment and became a Buddha.

His first teaching to his disciples was the Four Noble Truths: suffering, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering and the path to the cessation of suffering.

The cessation of suffering and the path from suffering leads us to the Eightfold Path—which are Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Endeavor, Right Mindfulness, Right Livelihood and Right Meditation.

Now all Buddhist schools have these beliefs in their teachings, but they may practice them differently. Theravada Buddhism, which practices strict adherence to the original Buddhist teaching migrated from India down to Sri Lanka. The precepts are taken very literally, and those who practice them are monks who seek enlightenment through self-power.

The other branch of Buddhism is Mahayana Buddhism which moved up through China, Korea and Japan. And as it spread through these countries, it picked up some of the local religious beliefs—such as Hindu, Taoism, Confucianism, Jainism and Shinto.

Our school of Buddhism developed from the teaching of Shinran Shonin, who was a Japanese monk from the Tendai school. The Tendai school believed all sentient beings are already enlightened, but we cannot see it because we are clouded by

delusion. To obtain this enlightened state, one must meditate to clear one's mind of ego and self.

After many years of practice, Shinran was dissatisfied by how other monks practiced Buddhism on Mount Hiei and, in 1201, he left the monastery to find a different path. He studied under his mentor Honen Shonin, who had founded a form of Buddhism known as Jodo-Shu or Pure Land School.

The teaching that Shinran took from Jodo-Shu was based on the 18th Vow of Amitabha Buddha, which states: If, when I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings in the land of the 10 quarters who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be born in my land, and call my Name, even 10 times, should not be born there, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment. Excluded, however are those who commit the five gravest offences and abuse the right Dharma.

Also, the chanting of Amitabha Buddha's name—whether one is right or poor, intelligent, good or evil—one can attain Buddhahood.

The difference between Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and other Buddhist schools is:

1. It focuses on Amitabha Buddha and the practice of reciting the Nembutsu.
2. Jodo Shinshu is a simple religion. Unlike other schools requiring monastic practice or meditation, Jodo Shinshu followers can obtain enlightenment through the recitation of the Nembutsu.
3. In Shin Buddhism, obtaining awakening comes naturally through the acceptance of one's own nature.
4. The practice of Jodo Shinshu places strong emphasis on the community and communal practice.

As we recite the Three Treasures, we understand this is the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu. I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Dharma. I take refuge in the Sangha.

As Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, we do not condemn other paths to enlightenment, but we are aware of our own inability to obtain it and rely on Amitabha Buddha to help us obtain Enlightenment.

Namo Amida Butsu

*Although my eyes, blinded by passions, do not see the brilliant light which embraces me,
the Great Compassion never tires, always casting its light upon me.*

Coming up: New Life for Old Bags, General Meeting

By Jeanne Toguri

We hope everyone has been enjoying their summer. It seems to have gone so fast, despite some hot humid weather.

New Life for Old Bags: Our next session is from 12:30 to 2:30 pm Sunday, Sept. 14 in the Social Hall. We hope you can join us to make sleeping mats for the homeless using plastic bags. No materials or experience needed. Though our sessions are generally held the second Sunday of every month, we will not be having a session in October due to the Chicago Marathon which goes through our neighborhood.

Buddha, Bingo and Lunch: The MBT BWA's annual meeting and luncheon will be held from 12:30 to 3 pm Sept. 28 in the Social Hall.

At the meeting we would like to get input from our member-ship on the following issues:

1. Updating of our cookbook "Oishii Cookery." Currently, we have only a limited number of books left for sale from the last printing.
2. The 2031 World Buddhist Women's Convention to be held in Las Vegas will be hosted by the Buddhist Churches of American Federation of Buddhist Women's Association, of which we are a part. Currently, the 2031 WBWC Planning Committee is asking for input and feedback from all the chapters on the concept of "Harmony in Diversity: Awakening Through Sound and Spirit."
3. We are in process of updating our bylaws, so if you have any amendments, please bring them to the General Meeting.
4. Discussion on whether to have a Flower Power fall fundraiser.
5. Membership Drive for 2026.

Following the meeting, we'll put business aside for some bingo fun. Please bring a white elephant gift (under \$10 value) for



MBT

Women's Association presents:

BUDDHA BINGO & LUNCH



435 West Menomonee Street
Chicago, IL 60614



Sunday 9/28
12:30-3pm
MBT Social Hall
\$5 WA members
\$10 non-members

Bring white elephant gifts
under \$10 for our prizes.

No wrapping necessary.

Bring what you can!
Italian from Orso's for lunch

[Learn more about the MBT WA](https://mbtchicago.org/buddhist-womens-association/)

<https://mbtchicago.org/buddhist-womens-association/>

the bingo prizes. (It's a good time to clean out slightly used items you no longer need; no need to wrap them).

Lunch will be Italian food from Orso's. Cost is \$5 for MBT BWA members, \$10 for nonmembers.



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happenings

Continued from page 2

paired with mindfulness, can help you stay focused, release stress and build resilience. It's also a great opportunity for the community to meet local Asian American therapists in a friendly, informal setting. Bento lunch by Sankyu Sushi & Izakaya and sweets by Sugar Bliss will be provided. Cost is \$20. 9Round is at 22 W. Schaumburg Rd., Schaumburg, Click [here](#) to register.

It's all about that bass ...

Those who stopped in at the Montrose Saloon in mid-August were lucky enough to hear our own **Grady Hutt** playing bass with his country band, the **Cold Motions**. "They were great," says **Kiku Taura**, who was in the crowd, "and Grady is such a showman!!"

If you weren't at the Montrose Saloon, never fear. The Cold Motions will be back on stage on Oct. 10—this time at Fuller's Pub, 3203 W. Irving Park Rd.

At the cinema!

In July, **Taryn Hutt**'s short animated film, "The Finger Wife," premiered at the Cinema Femme Short Film Festival at the Music Box Theater. We hear there will be another screening in September up in Lake County Congratulations, Taryn!

Park this way!

While the masses were out in Chicago craning their heads skyward on a recent mid-August weekend, a few dedicated MBTers were standing guard at the temple parking lot, helping visitors to the Chicago Air & Water Show park. Thank you (once again), **Nancy** and **Greg Rivera**, **Gary Tsuchiyama**, **Ken Kadoyama** and **Rev. Todd** and **Connie Tsuchiya**.

A summer recap

"This summer has been beautiful for me," says **Gillion Carrara**. Here are the reasons why, according to Gillion:

1. The jewelry and tableware I create in my studio are now represented for sale in Europe.
2. I have been intentional in attending history lectures at the Smithsonian online.
3. It is a pleasure and satisfaction to go to the gym for pilates stretch and tai chi.
4. In September, I will return to teaching at the School of the Art Institute and fashion history online for six weeks. (Email me at gillioncarrara@gmail.com if you are interested in participating in the webinar.)
5. I have learned to make pickles in my kitchen and fruit jam.

Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck

The "natives" are making sure **Yvonne**



Harada becomes an early riser. "I'm in Hawaii to help clean and clear out my parents' house," she tells us. "I feel like I'm living on a chicken farm because there are wild chickens that live in the yard of the house across from my parents' house and they also come in to our yard and make a lot of noise from around 4:30 am! There are no storm windows, so you hear it loud and clear!"

But come Sept. 4, Yvonne will say goodbye to the noisy neighbors and will be heading to Bismarck, ND. From there, she'll be going to Ft. Lincoln, the site of a DOJ internment camp that held Japanese Americans during World



Clockwise from top left: Joann Toguri, Kaye Shinozaki and Nancy Rivera dress up to join in Bon Odori dancing at Heiwa Terrace; Gillion Carrara's work is now represented for sale in Europe; Taryn Hutt at the Music Box Theater where her animated film "The Finger Wife" recently premiered.

War II. The 55th annual Tribal Technical College International Pow Wow will also be held there. And Taiko Arts Midwest, the group Emily Harada performs with, will be performing there. Emily was asked by **Kimi Romportl**, a taiko player from Enso Daiko, of Minneapolis, to compose a piece for this. Kimi is also a former member of Kogen Taiko, as were Connie and Rev. Todd, and one of her parents was interned at Ft. Lincoln.

Dance, dance, dance

The Bon Odori fun continued after July's dancing in the MBT parking lot was over. **Nancy Rivera** and **Joann Toguri** joined **Kaye Shinozaki** for Obon dancing at Heiwa Terrace. The beautiful yukata that Nancy wore was hand-sewn by Shinozaki San.

Busy summer bees

Alex Vincer has been taking full advantage of the joys that summer offers. "I enjoyed fishing, hiking and watching Brewers baseball with my children, along with watching them perform in musicals at the Racine Theater Guild," he says. "I also visited three fairs with my family: the Chicago Chinatown Summer Fair, the Racine County Fair, and the Bristol Renaissance Faire." Whew! Sounds like a lot of fun!

see happenings, page 17



Alex Vincer and family filled their summer with all kinds of fun activities—from different kinds of fairs to fishing and hiking to performing in musical theater.



happenings

Continued from page 16

Need more taiko?

Save the Date for the **AIRMW Cool Ladies 3rd annual recital** on Saturday, Oct. 4. The recital will be held at the Edge Theater in Chicago. More details to come.

Days gone by

Victor Miyata found some copies of MBT Bulletins from the 1970s that had belonged to his late sister **Joy Okayama**. The oldest was April 1972. Some fun facts from Victor:

- I didn't know that "Happenings" was once called "Chit Chat."
- Postage to mail Bulletins back in April 1972 was 8 cents.
- By October 1977, the postage had jumped to 13 cents.

Celebration time!

We heard from **Hiroko Kawaguchi Warshauer** that her mother, **Suzuko Kawaguchi**, just celebrated her 100th birthday! Suzuko was a longtime

member of MBT while she lived in Chicago and now lives in San Marcos, Texas (for the last 16 years). Her family and friends helped her celebrate. "We danced Tanko Bushi around her and **Jeremy**, a grandson, and **Deanna Badgett** a friend played a medley of Japanese songs such as "Kojo no Tsuki," "Sakura" and "Yuuyake Koyake" for her on their violins as we sang along.

Happy birthday to...

We would like to send happy birthday wishes to our friends who were born in the month of September. Happy birthday to:

Elaine Ogawa / Sept. 5
Sandra Adams / Sept. 7
Alan Arima / Sept. 9
Rev. Ron Miyamura / Sept. 10
Michael Harada / Sept. 10
Fumi Matsushita / Sept. 13
Nancy Endo / Sept. 21
Alex Yu / Sept. 23
Emiko Morimoto / Sept. 23
Luca Macri / Sept. 26

oishii / recipes from mbt friends

Flank Steak

Ingredients

1½ lbs. flank steak
 2 eggs, beaten
 ½ cup flour
 ½ cup vegetable oil

For sauce:

½ cup soy sauce
 ¼ cup sugar
 ¼ cup wine

Directions

1. Pound flank steak and score. Slice diagonally.
2. Marinate in sauce (see below) overnight or 3 hours.
3. Dip in egg, then flour and fry in hot oil. Drain on paper towel.

For sauce:

Combine soy sauce, sugar and wine. Set aside.

To order a copy of "Oishii Cookery," send a check (\$15, if picked up at the temple; \$20, if mailed—made out to MBT Women's Association) to MBT, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614.

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Being *bonbu* is the essence of Enlightenment

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Aug 24, 2025.

By Rev. Ron Miyamura

I hope everyone survived Ginza Holiday this year! Thank you to everyone who came out to be a part Ginza.

Ginza Holiday, of course, is the major external fund-raiser for the temple and, perhaps, even more important, it is being part of what I have come to know as the “larger Ginza Community,” which includes all of the temple members who worked, but also so many others who come out on a less regular basis, plus those who come out only at Ginza time. And we have so many other volunteers—and we have the vendors, the stage performers, the unique Waza craftsmen. And we are grateful for all the customers who attend.

All these and others are part of a greater Ginza Community for which the Midwest Buddhist Temple is grateful.

And the Ginza Holiday has been going on for 70 years. That is, in itself, pretty remarkable. The temple has been here in Chicago for 81 years—and that, too, is pretty remarkable.

But it is no accident. There have been so many people who have contributed so much to make all this happen. And, the first leader who started all of this, is the late Rev. Gyodo Kono.

So, it is appropriate that the service will happen to use one of his quotes as the Closing Reflection—and we will hear it later. The quote is “Ignorance and base passion just as they are, are the essence of Enlightenment.”

This is such a profound quote, and I wonder what he actually said in Japanese. I am one of those who know just enough Japanese to be dangerous because I would usually misunderstand what was actually said. But I muddle on.

To repeat: “Ignorance and base passion just as they are, are the essence of Enlightenment.”

Ignorance and base passions are the translation of the Buddhist technical term “*bonno*,” which is the basic human condition. That is, we are limited, ignorant, foolish and self-centered and the human term is that we are all *bonbu* full of *bonno*. We are just *bonbu*.

Shinran understood and experienced being *bonbu* and his limitations, ignorance, foolishness and self-centeredness kept him from finding Enlightenment during his 20 years of



“Ignorance and base passion just as they are, are the essence of Enlightenment.”

practices as a Tendai monk on Mt. Hiei.

It was only when Shinran encountered Honen did the Other Power of the Nembutsu change his life. Honen and his understanding of Pure Land Buddhism changed Shinran's Path. For Honen, the Pure Land Path included everyone—and excluded no one because of the Infinite Compassion of Amida Buddha.

Thus, even with all of our limitations, ignorance, foolishness and self-centeredness, we are all the same. When we call the Name of Amida—that is, to say, *Namu Amida Butsu*—we receive the benefits of Amida's Compassion.

Amida's Compassion and Wisdom just overpower any and all *bonno*. Amida overcomes and overpowers all human limitations—our *bonno*. And at death, we can be reborn in the Pure Land.

Shinran understood his experience in a unique way. Being *bonbu* is the essence of Enlightenment.

By really acknowledging our limitations, ignorance, foolishness and self-centeredness is the exact cause of becoming Enlightened. This moment of

really knowing the depth of our *bonbu*-ness is what Awakens us to the infinite spiritual world of Enlightenment.

Shinran called this Shinjin. Further, Shinran called this *Ni-shu Jin-shin*, or Two Kinds of Deep Awakening.

This is what makes Shin Buddhism a bit different from other Pure Land schools.

Shinran understood that Awakening in this world, while we are still alive, is something we can enjoy until our physical death and then our rebirth in the Pure Land as a Bodhisattva.

And this Awakening is caused by Compassion of Amida being given to us. All human efforts are doomed to failure because we are full of limitations, ignorance, foolishness and being self-centered. The gift of Amida, in particular, the name of Amida, is the cause of our Awakening.

The result is *Nishu Jinshin*, or Two Kinds of Deep Awakening, which means that all the limitations of my physical self is simultaneously aware of the benefits of being Enlightened in the Pure Land.

Usually, there is a change of direction. In other schools of Buddhism (and for that matter, most other religions), one is stumbling around in this world and probably destined for hells, but something happens and we are awakened and change directions, to be destined for Enlightenment.

Shinran's insight was slightly different, but importantly different. We do not change direction—we are simultaneously and equally destined for hells and destined for the Pure Land.

Logically, we cannot be headed in two directions at the same time, but in Shinran's spiritual understanding, yes, we could. We are both, and at the same time, destined for hells and destined for the Pure Land while we are living in this physical world.

The quote, again: “Ignorance and base passion just as they are, are the essence of Enlightenment.”

Realizing that we are *bonbu* is exactly Enlightenment.

This is the impossibility of living in this physical world and the spiritual world at the same time. But that is Amida's concern. Just enjoy your life, let Amida do the work.

Namu Amida Butsu ... with gratitude and kindness beyond words

Members share Niji info at Ginza

By Taryn Hutt

Several members of the Niji Dharma group joined the Ginza Holiday Festival as official volunteers this year, staffing the MBT Info Table and merchandise booth (some doubling up with other volunteer roles).

They shared information about our temple's environment of inclusivity with many visitors, and they sold specially made bookmarks designed by Niji Dharma member Sage Guyton.

The bookmark features a quote that the Niji Dharma group holds dear: "*Amida*

Buddha is said to have the 'Wisdom of Non-Discrimination.' This is manifested in the Great Compassion that embraces all beings."

The Niji Dharma bookmarks will be available for sale at the MBT Bookstore in the temple's Social Hall on Sundays or by order through the office. Sales benefit the temple's LGBTQ+ Fund. Donations have been used to send members to the Okaeri Conference in Los Angeles, to support Pride Month programs and materials, and to purchase sets of books for group discussion.



Sept. 8, 2017: Lessons of humble rice

This is excerpted from "Dharma Is Everywhere: Reflections Shared at the California State Assembly" by Revs. Bob and Patti Oshita.

By Rev. Bob Oshita

Our Sacramento summer will most likely close with this one final weekend heatwave. Whenever the weather heats up, I recall hearing how important hot weather was for rice crops to grow well. Without sufficient heat, many fields will have poor yields. But this year, when the Northern California rice harvest begins this month, 2017 should prove to be a bumper crop harvest.

Throughout Asia, rice has long been synonymous with life itself. When there was a shortage of rice, times would be hard. Devastation of the rice crops could easily lead to famine. Very naturally, over time there developed not only an appreciation for the value of rice, but a sense of reverence for every grain. In our home, while growing up, we could not leave even one grain of rice in our bowls. This was a lesson to be respectful (and to not be wasteful) that our parents taught us from childhood.

For centuries, rice has not only been synonymous with life, but the stalks of rice at the end of the growing season are also considered a poetic image of life that is worthy of our emulation. The image is this: the more successfully a stalk of rice grows (the more it matures and reaches its full potential), the lower it hangs its head. In other words, like the stalks of rice growing, the more we mature and successfully fulfill our lives, the more humbly we should bow our heads in gratitude. This is truly an image of life that is worthy of our emulation.

Namo Amida Butsu...with kindness and gratitude beyond words.

Join us for a pancake brunch to celebrate the MBT community and say thanks to our Ginza volunteers.

SANGHA & GINZA VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BRUNCH

MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE

SEPTEMBER 7

AT 11:30 AM AFTER SERVICE

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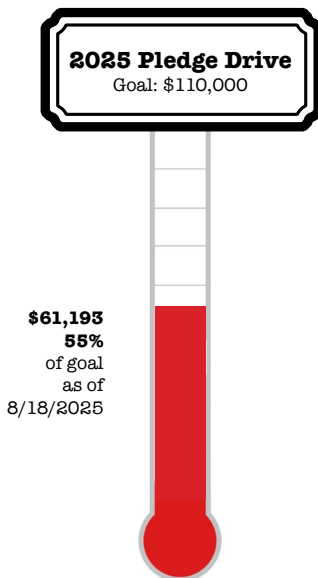
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MBT welcomes everyone to become temple members, with no minimum pledge requirement. All MBT supporters are asked to give what they can financially, as well as their much appreciated time and effort. Donations can be made online at mbtchicago.org/join-support/donate-now/; look for the purple "Donate Now."

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What are the benefits of making a pledge?

- Maintains the daily cost of operating the temple (salaries, utilities, maintenance, supplies)
- Supports our religious, social and community programs
- At the \$300 minimum, allows voting on key temple issues
- Receive our monthly Bulletin newsletter
- Provides membership in the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), including Wheel of Dharma newsletter
- Ensures the continued growth of the temple



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domo

The Midwest Buddhist Temple gratefully acknowledges the following donations received between **July 15 and Aug. 12.**

Due to some delays in processing, you may see your

donation acknowledgment in the next issue of the Bulletin. Please reach out to the office with any questions. Please notify the Bulletin or the MBT Office of any omissions or corrections.

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Yumi Masuoka

Linda & Michael Naito

Kachiko & Koji Okubo

Greg & Nancy Rivera

Sue Romano

John & Darlene Ruh

Kaye Shinozaki

Roger & Arlene Suekama

Joanne Toguri

Jeanne & David Toguri

Dorothy Yahiro

Mrs. Takako Yoshihara

Joy & Jesse Zavala

Obon Candles

Terry Cichocki & John Bikulcs

Yumi Masuoka

Dr. Rohan De Silva &

Dr. Maria Ritzema

Joy & Jesse Zavala

July Memorial

John Adachi

Terry Cichocki & John Bikulcs

Kachiko & Koji Okubo

Joy & Jesse Zavala

August Memorial

Mark & Susan Brown

Pat Harada & Tom Rowland

Dr. Michael & Yvonne Harada

Michiye Hirota

Ted & Gayle Kodama

Elizabeth Masamitsu

Lynne & Jerry Matsumoto

Tom Matsumoto & Linda

Ogawa

Elaine Matsushita & Bob

Sutter

Fumiko Matsushita

Victor & Sandy Miyata

Sharon Miyata-Sipich

Dr. Rick & Joyce Morimoto

Linda & Michael Naito

Steve Arima & Elaine Ogawa

Kachiko & Koji Okubo

Greg & Nancy Rivera

Janet & Rex Takahashi

Kiku Taura & Takamasa

Onose

Phil Umeki

Joann Umeki

Dr. Leslie Yamamoto &

Gordon Purtell

Nokotsudo

Kachiko & Koji Okubo

Luann Takaki

Outreach / Homeless Project

Im Noeun

Legacy Garden

Terry Cichocki & John Bikulcs

Zena Burns & Richard

Jackson (in memory of Alvin

Hayashi)

Jean Inouye (in memory of

Alvin Hayashi)

Donna Kobayashi (in memory

of Alvin Hayashi)

Lynne & Jerry Matsumoto (in

memory of Alvin Hayashi)

Linda & Michael Naito (in

memory of Alvin Hayashi)

Ginza

Mark & Susan Brown

Steve Arima & Elaine Ogawa

Fanli Zhao

Pledge / Membership

John Adachi

Stacy Arima Castillo

Carol Baba

John Barnes

Mark & Susan Brown

Mr. & Mrs. Masahiko

Higashikawa

Brian Key

see **domo**, page 21



Midwest Buddhist Temple

Pledge Drive 2025

**Year of
the Snake**

**Growth
Wisdom
Transformation**

**2024 Goal:
\$105K
Achieved!**

**2025 Goal:
\$110K**

Last year we celebrated the 80th anniversary of our temple. We looked to the past and found ourselves humbled by the hard work and dedication of those who came before us. Reflecting on the past allows us to look forward with more clarity.

Like the snake, our temple moves in cycles of growth, wisdom, and transformation. Growth is clearly on display over the past eight decades, with wisdom earned through both unimaginable hardships and joyful celebrations. Now, we move into a cycle of transformation, one that will create more opportunities to share the Dharma with longtime members and first-time visitors alike.

Today we ask for your financial support as a marker of dedication to our temple and an investment in its future, to ensure that we are laying the foundation for another 80 years of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

While there is no financial requirement to be considered a member of the sangha, you may wish to participate as a Pledge Member with an annual donation of **\$450 per individual**. More details and our *Guide to Financial Giving* is included [here](#).

In gassho,

MBT Board of Trustees

domo

Continued from page 20

Marshall Kubota
Elaine Matsushita & Bob
Sutter
Victor & Sandy Miyata
Sharon Miyata-Sipich

Derek & Kristine Provo
Blackwelder
Susan & Robert Rakstang
Kenneth Russell
Rich Taura
Joy & Jesse Zavala
Special Donations
Ho Etsu Taiko

Jiuqing Cheng
Robert Hashimoto (on behalf
of Nisei American Legion
Post 1183)
Myrna Hogan
Ken Hollars
Dean Katahira
Karen Kikukawa

Kachiko & Koji Okubo
Sue Romano
Chika Sekiguchi
Kendall Smith
Tim West
Robin Wylie

save the dates

SEPT 7 The Events/Outreach Committee and the 2025 Ginza Committee will host a Sangha & Ginza Volunteer Appreciation Brunch. Please join us for a delicious (free) meal dedicated to our Sangha and Ginza volunteers.

Time: 11:30 am. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **Cost:** Free. **RSVP** @ this link. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

SEPT 13 Come join us when Saturday Afternoon at the Japanese Cinema returns to the temple's Social Hall. We'll be showing "All About Our House" (*Minna no ie*), with English subtitles. The film is about old against new and modern against tradition when a couple builds their dream house. The wife's father is in the construction business so he would be the natural choice to take the lead, but his daughter is bent on having a modern house and retains a younger man to complete the job. The father's help being still required makes things devolve into a clash of styles, wills and old Japan with the new. Popcorn and snacks will be served.

Time: 1 pm. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **Cost:** Free; donations welcome. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

SEPT 14 Our next New Life for Old Bags session will be held from 12:30 to 2:30 pm Sunday, Sept. 14, in the Social Hall. We hope you can join us as we transform plastic bags into sleeping mats for our unhoused neighbors. As of January of this year, our site has been able to give four sleeping mats to the unhoused population. No experience or materials are needed.

Time: 12:30–2:30 pm. **Location:** MBT. **Cost:** Free. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

SEPT 27 Join us for our Homeless Project sandwich-making day. We will make sandwiches at the temple and also accept sandwiches made at home and dropped off at the temple.

Time: Sandwich-making at noon; dropoffs of sandwiches made at home at 1 pm. **Location:** MBT. **More information:** Please contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801, if you would like to participate.

OCT 5 Please come and shop for some wonderful baked treats or consider donating baked goods to support the temple's Outreach projects.

Time: 11:30 am. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.



OCT 19 Join us on our visit to the beautiful Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford. These beautiful gardens were designed and built by Hoichi Kurisu, who also designed our MBT Legacy Garden. If we're lucky, we may catch a beautiful display of fall colors.

Time: 11:30 am–6 pm. **Location:** Leave from MBT. **Cost:** \$15, includes lunch, charter bus ride and garden entrance fee. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

SEPT

at midwest buddhist temple

7

SUNDAY

10:30 am Monthly Memorial Service / Rev. Todd Tsuchiya

11:30 am Sangha & Ginza Volunteer Appreciation Brunch (*see left and page 19*)

13

SATURDAY

11:30 am Saturday Afternoon at the Japanese Cinema (*see details at left*)

14

SUNDAY

10:30 am Fall Ohigan Service / Rev. Ron Miyamura

12:30 pm New Life for Old Bags

21

SUNDAY

10:30 am Fall Ohigan Service / Rev. Ron Miyamura

27

SATURDAY

Noon / 1 pm Sandwich-making/dropoff for Homeless Project

28

SUNDAY

10:30 am Family Service / Rev. Kurt Rye