



# Rev. Ron recovering from surgery

As you may have heard, Rev. Ron had quadruple bypass surgery on Dec. 15. He is home now and on the path to a full recovery and getting stronger each day.

Rev. Ron and Elaine thank everyone for all of the well wishes.

If you would like to send a card, please direct them

to the temple, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614, so that we may collect and deliver them in batches.

During Rev. Ron's absence, MBT will continue to conduct services and programs as planned. The weekly service is being managed by the Service Planning Committee.

Midwest Buddhist Temple

# Bulletin

The monthly newsletter of the Midwest Buddhist Temple

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435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614 • 312.943.7801 • mbtchicago.org • Minister: Rev. Ron Miyamura



## Making merry, making mochi

By Carl Ichikawa

On Dec. 20, the temple held its annual Mochitsuki Festival, with Sangha members and friends transformed 125 pounds of rice into plates of fresh goodness.

The crew started early to steam the rice, which was then put into machines that magically

transform the grains of rice into sticky mochi. The mochi goes through a manual cutter and is then shaped into the familiar round mochi.

Plates of nine mochi will be sold for \$10 on Sundays while quantities last. Thanks to Albert Sora, Omni Mee and Elaine Miyamura for coordinating, and to the many volunteers.

- *More Mochitsuki Festival photos on page 8.*
- *Stories and photos of MBT's New Year's Eve and New Year's Day services on page 9.*

## DS kids show their mochi-making powers

By Jennifer Toguri

Happy New Year! In December, the Dharma School continued the Buddhism for Teenagers discussion series, focused on Dana (giving) by continuing with a design project to gift a custom-made skateboard, and had fun with stories and games.

We ended the year with our annual mochitsuki  
*see **dharma school**, page 6*



# happenings

By Elaine Matsushita

The 43rd Annual Lunar New Year Gala, hosted this year by the Chinese American Community, will be held on Saturday, Feb. 28 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel, 2121 S. Prairie Avenue, Chicago. Rev. Patti Nakai and Sofia Ozaki, representing the Japanese American community, as well as Dr. Manjeet Singh Chawla and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, will be honored.

Rev. Patti, the retired resident minister of the Buddhist Temple of Chicago, will receive the Exemplary Community Service Award.

Rev. Patti served at BTC from 1995 to 2023. Born in Chicago, she received a master's degree in Shin Buddhist studies from Otani University in Kyoto. A fully ordained Jodo Shinshu minister, Rev. Patti has been involved in various interfaith activities in dialogue with Muslims, Christians and other faiths, and has been an active member of several Japanese American community groups.

Sofia Ozaki will receive the Youth Who Excels award. As a Japanese Pakistani American Muslim woman, Sofia Ozaki represents her Asian American identity across many community spaces. She is a first-year student at Ball State University's college of architecture and works as a part-time research assistant in a National Science Fund study on daylighting and the effects on children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Sofia balances her studies with her volunteer work within the community, and her own at-home baking business.

In addition, the Ping Tom Memorial Pan Asian Award will go to Dr. Maneet Singh Chawla, and the Sandra Otaka Memorial Grand Asian Award will be presented to the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights.



Tickets are \$150 each, or \$1,500 per table of 10. For information on how you can attend the Lunar New Year Celebration, please contact Karen Kanemoto at [jmaskanemoto@gmail.com](mailto:jmaskanemoto@gmail.com).

## Record gift to JANM

The **Japanese American National Museum** has received a \$20 million gift from philanthropist **MacKenzie Scott**. This transformative gift is the largest single gift in JANM's history and, like

Dan Peterson spent two glorious weeks in Egypt recently. One week was on land and a Nile river cruise and another week was spent scuba diving in the Red Sea.

Photos from Dan Peterson

her donation of \$10 million in 2021, is unrestricted, allowing the museum to determine the best use of the funds at a pivotal moment for its future.

"We are extraordinarily grateful to MacKenzie Scott for her historic vision and generosity," says the museum's press announcement. "This remarkable gift comes as JANM is poised for a new and exciting future. We enter the new year with a reinvigorated commitment to our mission, stronger-than-ever support from the community, and great anticipation for a transformed Museum experience when we reopen in 2026."

Her first gift of \$10 million made it possible for JANM to expand its programming as well as to serve its community and reach new people throughout their current renovation.

## Tea Talk

The Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois is hosting its 3rd

*see happenings, page 18*

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Don't forget to visit our website, [mbtchicago.org](http://mbtchicago.org), for more information about Shin Buddhism and the Midwest Buddhist Temple.



Photos by Joy Zavala

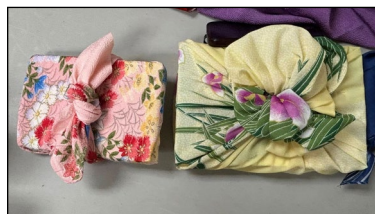
Students got to select furoshiki that came from Japan and learned a variety of ways to tie them artfully. Harumi Ichikawa (center) assisted teacher Gardiner Funo O'Kain.

## Class on furoshiki skills? That's a wrap

By Joy Zavala

Just in time for the holidays, our fun Furoshiki class welcomed 12 eager students who were ready to learn different techniques for wrapping gifts and transforming a piece of cloth into a bag.

Thanks to Gardiner Funo O'Kain for providing furoshiki purchased in Japan (we were able to choose one we liked) and showing us the proper way to tie a bow. Thank you also to Harumi Ichikawa for assisting with her creations and to all the students for attending.



The techniques for tying were as varied as the beautiful cloths provided for wrapping.



## Annual meeting, Shinnen-enkai set

Please join us on Sunday, Jan. 25 for our Annual Membership Meeting immediately after service. All are encouraged to attend to hear from our Board of Trustees President Jason Matsumoto and others on the temple's 2025 accomplishments and plans for 2026. Voting members will be asked to ratify the 2026 Operating Budget.

Following the meeting will be our Shinnen Enkai, or New Year Party, where lunch will be served along with entertainment. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 10 and younger.

You can purchase tickets at the temple or contact the office, 312.943.7801.

# Reminder of interdependence, interconnectedness

*The following is from an archived Dharma message that was shared originally on Dec. 15, 2024 and again on Dec. 21, 2025.*

**By Rev. Ron Miyamura**

**T**his morning is the Regular Sunday Morning Family Service, and we are observing the memorial service for the late Rev. Gyodo Kono, the minister who founded the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

Remembering Rev. Kono reminds me of the Japanese Buddhist phrase *in-nen*, which roughly translates as “causes and conditions.” It is a reminder of interdependence and interconnectedness of everything around us.

We are dependent on the causes and conditions around us. We affect things around us and things around us affect us. No one is an island.

Today, we can perhaps appreciate all the efforts of people like Rev. Kono that allows us to be here today.

I know there are many people who have never met Rev. Kono and, sometimes, I am asked about him. I was fortunate to work with Rev. Kono as his associate minister here at the Midwest Buddhist Temple from August 1973 until his sudden passing in December 1975.

Of course, my relationship with him was very important to me because I was a rookie minister who really did not know what it took to be a minister. Rev. Kono taught me a great deal.

I was such a rookie, and I do not come from a ministerial family, so everything was new. I had some book learning, and I had finished my master's degree in Shin Buddhism. But book learning has very little to do with being a minister.

Fortunately, Rev. Kono was a very patient man.

About the background of Rev. Kono. He arrived, freshly graduated from Ryukoku University with a bachelor's degree in Shin Buddhism. In 1937. He was assigned to the Hanford Buddhist Church in the Central Valley of California near Fresno.

With the advent of the Second World War, he ended up in the Rohwer, Ark., concentration camp. Rohwer was one of the smaller camps and was among the first to close. As the Rohwer Camp was closing, Rev. Kono got permission to go to Chicago and try to start a temple here.

The first service he held in Chicago was on July 10, 1944 at the South Parkway Community Center. Then the temple



office moved to the Near North Side at Division and Clark Streets.

The temple was able to rent the Uptown Players Theater until it burned to the ground just the day before the Hanamatsuri Service in 1946. The temple then used the Olivet Community Center and, in 1950, moved to the 1757 N. North Park building.

In 1971, Rev. Kono's lifelong dream of a new temple building came true when the Sangha moved into this building here on Menomonee Street.

One of the great mysteries continues to be: Why did Rev. Kono decide to stay in Chicago? In the late 1940s, Rev. Kono's father passed away, and he was invited to take over the family temple in Hiroshima. The family temple, called Sairin-ji, was a large and prosperous temple.

Rev. Kono could have returned to Japan and taken over the temple. And he could have had a comfortable life.

It was very nice to meet Rev. Kono's nephew. While he gave us some insight into Rev. Kono, the mystery of why he decided not to take over his family temple in Hiroshima remains.

He chose to stay in Chicago and decided to not be the 18th-generation minister of Sairin-ji. Instead, he took the challenge of building a new temple and he dedicated his life to building the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

For this, we are grateful.

What kind of man was Rev. Kono? Well, I am no expert, but I know he was a vigorous man who loved life. He was pretty athletic. He played tennis and was

a very good bowler.

Side story—and my favorite story about the early days of Rev. Kono: When he was first assigned to the Hanford Buddhist Church, he wanted to go to the local junior college to learn English. But the Board of Trustees at the time said, no. They said, “We are all going to make our millions and return to Japan, so we don't have to bother to learn English very much.”

Disappointed, Rev. Kono sort of bent the rules, and he signed up for a tennis class to get some exercise—and more importantly, to learn English.

For trying to learn English, he was ahead of his time.

He was a common man who liked to meet all kinds of people. It has been said that he loved to roam Rush Street looking for converts. Yes, he liked to have a drink or two.

Rev. Kono was a sharp dresser. He saved his money to buy Hickey Freeman suits that he had tailored because he was a short man. He always claimed that he was 5 foot 2 inches—but I don't know.

And it was appropriate that he was at the old downtown Marshall Field's Store for Men, looking for a new necktie for New Year's, when he had his heart attack and passed away at the age of 64.

He was also known to help new ministers from Japan. He would borrow money from some of his friends so that he had enough money to take the new ministers out for drinks after the meetings in California.

Back then, most of the meetings were in San Francisco, and he was familiar with the local places to make the new ministers from Japan feel more at home. This was part of the nurturing way of Rev. Kono.

Rev. Kono was best known as a dynamic speaker in Japanese.

There were few ministers who could match his skill in delivering a sermon in which he would have his audience, as they say, “eating out of the palm of his hand.”

He was such a good speaker, who used his voice and his body to whisper softly or shout loudly. His ability to convey emotion was well-known, and he was in demand to speak at temples all over the West Coast.

*see kono, page 5*



## kono

*Continued from page 4*

Rev. Kono has left his imprint on the Midwest Buddhist Temple, and many of the things we have today and do today are directly from the legacy of Rev. Kono.

In particular, I can still remember the strongest impression I had when I assisted at the first service was that there were a good number of people at the Regular Adult English Service and that everyone chanted the Sutra. Back in those days, there was a Dharma School Service, an English Adult Service and a Japanese Language Service.

Rev. Kono somehow encouraged the adult membership to attend Sunday services, and this was not common on the West Coast. I can remember that when I was growing up there was the regular Sunday morning services only for Dharma School, and there was an afternoon Japanese Language Service—but no Adult English service.

Maybe, there were Adult English Services only for the holidays. But here at MBT, from the very beginning, Rev. Kono could persuade members to come to Sunday Service.

But what was even more

*My favorite story about the early days of Rev. Kono: When he was first assigned to the Hanford Buddhist Church, he wanted to go to the local junior college to learn English. But the Board of Trustees at the time said, no. They said, "We are all going to make our millions and return to Japan, so we don't have to bother to learn English very much." Disappointed, Rev. Kono sort of bent the rules, and he signed up for a tennis class to get some exercise—and more importantly, to learn English.*

impressive to me was that everyone participated in the chanting. Again, growing up, only the minister chanted the sutra. And in Dharma School Service, this was just boring.

In more recent years, more of the West Coast temples have re-introduced chanting as something for everyone.

But here at MBT, from the very beginning, Rev. Kono could persuade members to participate in the chanting.

Again, Rev. Kono was ahead of his time.

But the biggest legacy that Rev. Kono left us is this naijin—the inner-sanctuary or the altar. Rev. Kono personally selected this butsudan. He had a vision of what he wanted—and it was non-traditional.

In the traditional Jodo Shinshu temple, the butsudan or Buddha-house, might be this size, but the statue would be about 18 inches high and surrounded by all kinds of

ornaments. The statue is supposed to be obscured and not easily seen. The ornaments were supposed to be an artistic interpretation of the Pure Land.

And in the Mahayana and Sanskrit tradition, the flowery details were meant to describe the lavish and ornate ornaments surrounding the Buddha.

Instead, Rev. Kono wanted a simple statue. In fact, the maker of this butsudan and statue is from a shop that normally caters to Shingon temples. All the shops that catered to Jodo Shinshu temples only could envision the traditional ways.

But the shop Rev. Kono found was able to find a shop to make the butsudan the way he envisioned.

We take for granted the beautiful simplicity of this naijin, but it was not an accident. We can thank Rev. Kono and the vision he had.

In America, the ornate decorations seemed out of place and kind of gaudy. For this, we can thank Rev. Kono.

Our Kono Fund is part of the legacy of Rev. Kono. After his sudden passing, some of the members, led by the late Noby Yamakoshi, started a scholarship fund in memory of Rev. Kono.

Originally the Kono Fund was for ministerial education, but it has expanded to Minister's Assistants training, general Buddhist Education and Special Projects.

And this fund continues today.

Today, we acknowledge the *in-nen*, the cause and conditions from the past that bring us here today. And we are part of the causes and conditions that will affect the future. And for this we are grateful.

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



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### dharma school

*Continued from page 1*

event. It was a great turnout, and we had a full house to make mochi by usu and machine. Thank you to everyone who participated and we are grateful for the opportunity to share this tradition with the families. We also paired this event to make holiday cards together as

we practiced dana this season.

We will continue to have Dharma School on the 1st and 3rd Sundays in the new year. We have exciting plans for 2026 including Dharma School-led services, Hanamatsuri, a sangha appreciation brunch, and more. Happy 2026!

#### **January events:**

**Jan. 4:** Dharma School class

**Jan. 18:** Dharma School class



More photos from the Dharma School Mochitsuki on page 7.

Photos by  
Jennifer Toguri  
and Jason  
Matsumoto





# How do Buddhists view Christmas?

*The following is from a Dharma message that was shared with the Dharma School students on Dec. 7, 2025.*

**By Rev. Ron Miyamura**

**T**his morning is also the Dharma School service, so I would like to take a few minutes to talk to the Dharma School students.

I am often asked how do Buddhists view Christmas. Well, there is no set answer. But I will give my views.

First, we are Americans. And culturally we cannot ignore

hohoho

Christmas as an American holiday. We all get December 25th as a holiday.

I do admire our Orthodox Jewish friends and followers of other religions who strictly ignore Christmas. On the other hand, historically, Buddhists have adapted to

local cultural traditions.

When we see the Christmas spirit as a time of giving, exchanging gifts, and wishing peace on earth, then the spirit of Christmas is fine for Buddhists. We just don't participate in the religious parts of Christmas.

So, it is our choice whether we want a Christmas tree and to exchange gifts and have a big meal. We can celebrate the spirit of Christmas and the spirit of selfless giving—Dana.

And we can remember that Santa Claus is constantly reminding us that he is Buddhist. Why might you ask? Well, Santa is always saying, "Ho, ho, ho!" And what does "ho" mean in Japanese?

"Ho" means Dharma. So Santa is constantly reminding us ... "Dharma, Dharma, Dharma."

## dharma school corner



Story and more photos from the Dharma School Mochitsuki on pages 1 and 6.

Photos by Jennifer Toguri and Jason Matsumoto



# Mochitsuki Festival 2025





# Ring in the new year, the Buddhist way

By Carl Ichikawa

Over 50 people attended the New Year's Eve Joya-E service on a blustery night that featured a short service led by Minister's Assistant Joy Zavala, followed by each person ringing the kansho (outside bell) a total of 108 times.

Why 108 you ask? Six senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, mind) times three feelings (pleasant, unpleasant, neutral) times two viewpoints (positive or negative).

Following the service, everyone enjoyed traditional toshikoshi soba which is buckwheat noodles served in a warm dashi broth. The Toshikoshi soba symbolizes crossing into the new year.

Dean Katahira cooked the noodles, Harumi Ichikawa made the dashi and toppings, while Carol Baba plus Greg and Nancy Rivera helped serve and clean up. Added treats were donated by Roy and Joyce Yamamoto (delicious char siu) and Allison Hagio (yummy cookies).



Sangha members gather at MBT on New Year's Eve for the Joya-E service and to ring the kansho 108 times, as well as enjoy toshokoshi soba.

Photo left by Jesse Zavala; photo above by Allison Hagio-Conwell.



Photo by Allison Hagio-Conwell

Starting the new year with ozoni and MBT mochi.

## Welcoming 2026 with MBT friends



By Joy Zavala

Happy New Year! After our New Year's Eve service with around 55 people attending, kansho ringing and toshi koshi soba noodles last night, we had our New Year's Day service with about 45 attendees.

Traditional ozoni soup with mochi made at the temple's Mochitsuki Festival was served.



Wishing all a happy,  
healthy new year.

*Jesse & Joy Zavala / Chicago*



Illustration by Takeshi Ishikawa / Vecteezy

Happiest of  
holidays to all!

*Kiku Taura & Takamasa Onose / Chicago*



Illustration by Wasitt Hemwarapornchai / Vecteezy

Wishing all a happy,  
healthy new year.

*Glynn, Carol, Mitch & Craig Isoda / Chicago*



Happy Year of the Horse!

*Fumiko Matsushita / Chicago*

~

Happy, healthy new year to all!

*Josh Fidler & Andrea Shlimon / Chicago*

~

May the Year of the Horse be  
good for everyone!

*The Yamamotos—Roy and Joyce / Chicago*



Happy new year to all!

*Rev. Ron & Elaine Miyamura / Chicago*



Happy 2026!

*Kenji Morimoto & Will Lawrenson / London, United Kingdom*





Good health for the New Year.

*Terry Cichocki & John Bikulcs /  
Harwood Heights*

~

Happy holidays and best  
wishes for the new year!

*The Harada family — Mike, Yvonne, Dana  
and Emily / Wilmette*

~

Happy new year!

*Carl & Harumi Ichikawa / Palatine*

~

Happy new year!

*Victor & Sandy Miyata / Des Plaines*

~

Wishing you peace, love & joy.

*Sharon Miyata-Sipich / Des Plaines*

~

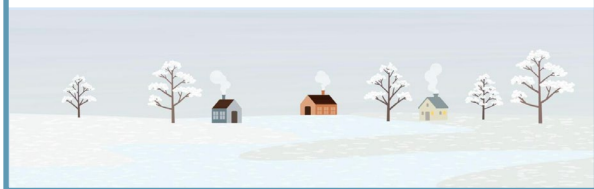
Happy, healthy 2026.

*Rick & Joyce Morimoto / Evanston*

~

Warm greetings to our Dharma  
friends.

*Gary & Rev. Patti Nakai / Skokie*



With gratitude and  
happiness.

*Steve Arima & Elaine Ogawa / Gurnee*



Happiest holidays!

*The Matsumotos—Jerry, Lynne & Dane /  
Wilmette*



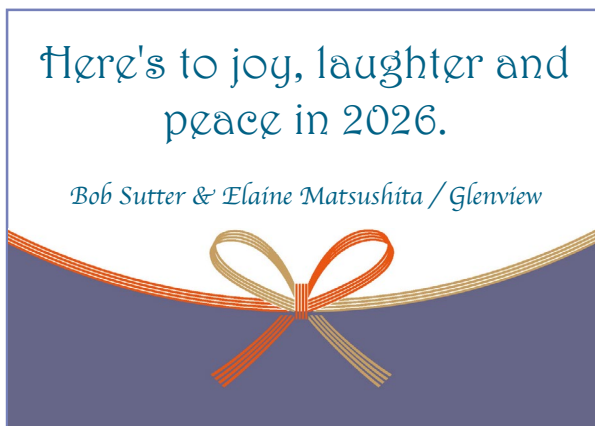
Wishing all a happy,  
healthy new year.

*Kathy & Amanda Isoda / Naperville*



Here's to joy, laughter and  
peace in 2026.

*Bob Sutter & Elaine Matsushita / Glenview*





merry merry

Judy & Wayne Matsuyama and Ryan.  
Marissa. Chris & Kolten Iwamura / Alea, Hawaii



From our home to yours.

Asako & Jan Nishimura / Edina, Minnesota



Wishing all a happy,  
healthy new year.

Rev. Todd & Connie Tsuchiya /  
Eden Prairie, Minnesota



Wishing all a wonderful  
2026!

Sam Fidler & Callye Foster / Missoula, Montana

~

Happy 2026!

Emiko Morimoto & David Yarmolinsky and  
Kohei & Naoki / Cambridge, Massachusetts



*“If I were capable of realizing Buddhahood by other religious practices  
and yet fall into hell for saying the Nembutsu, I might have dire regrets for having been deceived.*

*But since I am absolutely incapable of any religious practice, hell is my only home.”*

—Shinran Shonin

# The gift of liberation, the gift of the Dharma

*The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Nov. 30, 2025.*

**By Grady Hutt**

**G**ood morning! Thank you to Jesse Zavala for reading and ringing the kansho, Omni Mee for chairing today's service, Elaine Matsushita for the accompaniment, Robin for the next reading, and Alex Vincer and Ian Taura for Zoom hosting. And of course, thank you for being here in person, braving the weather, and for joining us on Zoom. Also, thank you to everyone who pitched in and shoveled snow!

Today I want to talk about gratitude. It's timely, of course, because Thanksgiving just passed, and we are entering into the warm and fuzzy holiday season.

This is the time to slow down, to recharge, and to take stock. To take a pause and realize that we have so much to be grateful for.

It is natural to be thankful during these days, but it takes some more conscious effort throughout the rest of the year to keep this frame of mind. It takes conscious effort to be grateful when we leave this building, when we are waiting for the bus, when we are sitting in a meeting that could have been an email, I could go on.

Fortunately, in our tradition, gratitude is a core principle. So as we walk this Nembutsu path together and learn more about the teachings, we are given constant reminders to be grateful. The most fundamental opportunity to practice gratitude is that Amida Buddha embraces us all.

This may seem fairly obvious to those of us who've been practicing this tradition for some time, since this is a phrase that is often repeated. But "Amida Buddha embraces us all" is not repeated because we can't think of anything else to say. Rather it is repeated because it is so important to our tradition. Through the teachings of Shinran Shonin, the founder of our tradition, we are taught that we are able to be reborn into the Pure Land, a state of being where the conditions are perfect for us to leave the wheel of birth, death and rebirth (known as Samsara) and achieve the state of pure liberation and bliss known as Nirvana.

By doing so, we become enlightened and, therefore, we become a Buddha. What makes our tradition unique is that we are able to achieve this liberation not through exceptional acts of devotion or a superhuman force of will. We don't need to live the cleanest, most pure existence to enter the Pure Land. We are accepted just as we are.

This idea of radical acceptance is unique to Jodo Shinshu, you aren't required to

change yourself to be worthy of liberation. Our teachings state that it is quite impossible to be liberated by yourself—what we call self-power. What will get us to the shores of the Pure Land is called "other power," and it is this other power to which we must entrust ourselves and dispel any notions that we have the individual ability to do it on our own.

Amida Buddha is this other power, and we practice this by reciting the phrase *Namu Amida Butsu*.

An important thing to note is that our practice is not passive—although Amida Buddha embraces us all and has guaranteed our rebirth in the Pure Land, we must keep the flames of the Nembutsu path alive in our own hearts.

For my journey, gratitude is the most effective way to keep running the engine of entrusting. You can start small with little gratitudes: I'm grateful I woke up this morning, I'm grateful for my bed and blankets. Real tiny things that we naturally take for granted.

You can follow this chain of gratitude all throughout your day—going to work or school, commuting home, getting dinner ready. All have countless things to be grateful for.

This chain connects us from being grateful to wake up in the morning all the way up to being grateful for having our rebirth in the Pure Land settled by Amida Buddha. Our teachings do not ask this of us, and Amida does not demand you be thankful. But by truly listening to the words of the Buddha, by earnestly thinking of lessons of our teachers, gratitude is the most natural response.

The Dharma is truly a wondrous gift, and we are so fortunate to be able to hear it. What else can we do but be profoundly grateful?

In working on this talk, I was going through the "Collected Works of Shinran" to find a nugget to expand upon, or find a quote to bookend this talk. To be honest, I was unable to find anything easy and small.

If you go through these teachings, just like our orange "Teachings of the Buddha" book, you can get absolutely lost. What I did find, however, was a wonderful section called "Hymns on Benefits in the Present." We don't typically speak large sections of the teachings during Dharma Talks, but I'm going to today. I bookmarked some of these hymns (there are 15 in total in this section) and kept looking around. But I kept returning to this whole section, and I started to investigate why I kept getting pulled back, and what it has to do with gratitude—since it has to fit my theme, of course.

It comes down to this: This is all a tremendous gift. Everything about this

experience we are having right now. Whether you are here in the hondo or on Zoom, we are experiencing a brief and beautiful time together as a Sangha. If this happens for us only 30 minutes a week, that's a priceless gift.

To hear these teachings, to hear the Dharma and however it lands in your heart is a gift. To be liberated by boundless wisdom and compassion, to have all darkness eliminated by the endless light and life of Amida—there is no gift to rival this.

And that word, gift, is very important. It's a gift—it is given freely, with no expectation of repayment. What we can do is sit with it and be grateful. Among the countless gifts we receive every day, there are none that rival the gift of the truth—the gift of liberation, the gift of the Dharma.

So with that, I'm going to read this section, titled "Hymns on Benefits in the Present":  
*Amida Tathagata came forth and guided beings,  
Teaching the "Chapter on Life-span"  
In the Sutra of Golden Splendor  
In order to end calamities and ensure long life*

*Out of compassionate concern for the people of the land,  
Master Saicho of Mount Hiei said that  
One should utter "Namu-amida-butsu"  
As a spell for eliminating the seven calamities.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"  
Which surpasses all virtues,  
Our heavy obstructions of evil—past,  
present, and future—  
Are all unfailingly transformed, becoming light.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"  
The benefits we gain in the present are boundless;  
The karmic evil of our transmigration in birth-and-death disappears,  
And determinate karma and untimely death are eliminated.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"  
Brahma and Indra venerate us;  
All the benevolent gods of the heavens  
Protect us constantly, day and night.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"  
The four great deva-kings together  
Protect us constantly, day and night,  
And let no evil spirits come near.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"  
The earth-goddess called Firmness  
Reveres and protects us constantly, day and night,  
Accompanying us always just as shadows do things.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-butsu,"*

see **gift**, page 17



# Live your life as an empty teacup

*The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Dec. 7, 2025.*

**By Rev. Ron Miyamura**

**T**his morning, I would like to talk about my favorite ways of explaining what Buddhism and Shin Buddhism is all about.

First, the story that I call "A Full Tea Cup."

*Click this [link](#) to hear the Dharma message shared by Cliff Long on Dec. 28, 2025.*

In Kyoto, at a famous Zen temple in the Arashiyama area—the temple, by the way, is not important, nor the name of the priest. The story is important.

One of the members of this temple was a very rich merchant. But one day, as the merchant was getting older, he decided he needed to know the meaning of life.

So, he made a 30-minute appointment with the head priest, thinking 30 minutes would be enough since the priest was so famous.

On the appointed day, the merchant went to the temple and was led into a small tearoom and asked to wait for the priest. The merchant waited and waited, and the 30 minutes passed.

The merchant went to find someone and demanded to see the head priest. After all, he was a rich person who gave a lot of money to the temple. And he was a busy man, so he did not have time to just wait.



He was led back to the tearoom and was told the priest would be there soon.

Finally, the head priest came into the room where the merchant was waiting. He was carrying a tray with a teapot and two cups. He quietly sat down and smiled.

The merchant was beside himself, saying, it was rude of him to keep him waiting because he donated so much money to his temple and on and on.

The priest simply said, "First, let us have some tea." He started to pour tea into his cup, and he poured and he poured.

The tea filled the cup, then overflowed and spilled on the table.

The merchant shouted out, "What are you doing, old man? Can't you see the teacup is already full and you are making a mess!!"

The priest quietly said, "You are like the

teacup—so full of yourself that nothing can possibly be added nor learned.

End of story.

This story has many meanings, of course. But the main point is if you are so full of yourself, you are like a full teacup. Nothing can be added. Nothing can be learned.

When one's ego is so strong, and one is convinced that he or she is the center of the universe, then they cannot accept anything else. It is only when we accept that I am only a very small part of the universe that I can learn from others—and we let the Dharma into our lives.

We should live our lives as an empty teacup, so new things can be added, new things can be learned.

As an empty teacup, we can enjoy and appreciate new experiences and enjoy being able to accept more.

The empty teacup is a reminder of Sunyata, or in Buddhist philosophy, "emptiness." The meaning of things is found in the interval, or the space, or the emptiness between things.

An empty teacup has meaning because of the empty space between the walls of the cup.

Look into yourself, and try to be less of a full teacup and more of an empty tea cup.

*Namu Amida Butsu – with gratitude and kindness beyond words*

## Find out ways to volunteer

**A**re you interested in volunteer opportunities with the Midwest Buddhist Temple? If you are, just fill out this [form](#) and join the 2026 MBT Volunteer Mailing List. No commitment, just information!

We'll contact you when new volunteer opportunities are announced (new, fun projects in the works). We definitely appreciate your interest.



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## **Oyako Domburi**

Yield: 6 servings

### **Ingredients**

- 1 frying chicken (3 lbs.)
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 4 Tbsp. cooking oil, plus few drops sesame oil (optional)
- 1 cup shiitake mushrooms, soaked, drained, stemmed and sliced
- 1/2 cup scallions, sliced
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 cup green peas, cooked
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 3 cups rice, cooked for serving

### **Directions**

1. Remove the skin and bones from chicken; cut chicken into small pieces.
2. For marinade, mix soy sauce and sugar. Marinate chicken for 30 minutes. Drain.
3. Heat oil in a wok or skillet; saute chicken for about 5 minutes. Add shiitake and scallions; saute 2 minutes.
4. Add chicken broth and peas; cook over medium heat for 2 minutes. Pour the eggs into the pan, stir slightly and cook 2 minutes or until eggs are set.
5. Divide steamed rice in 6 bowls and spoon Oyako mixture over rice.

*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.*

## **buddhist women's association**

# **Wishing all a happy Year of the Horse**

**By Jeanne Toguri**

**A**kemashite omedeto—Happy New Year, the Year of the Horse. According to the Chinese calendar, the Year of the Horse signifies, strength, independence and vitality. We hope each one of you has a healthy, prosperous new year.

**Membership drive:** Our membership drive is in full swing. Consider joining us. Dues remain at \$10, with a portion going to the Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Association and the Eastern District League

Buddhist Women's Association. To learn more about our organization please see the [MBT website](#), under About Us.

**2026–2027 toban list:** The new toban list is active now. The rotation of your group has gone backward on the schedule. In other words, if you were with a group that covered January/February, you are now assigned to covering November / December. If you have any further questions, please contact MBTBWA at the temple office, 312.943.7801..



**Midwest Buddhist Temple presents:**  
**Women's Association**

**Membership Drive**  
**Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025–Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026**

**Why you should join MBTWA**  
The MBT BWA is **open to women and men of all ages\***. It is a support group where friendships are created and the Dharma is shared.  
Membership is only \$10 annually. We help MBT with:

- Social activities
- Toban groups
- Dharma school
- New Life for Old Bags
- Bake sales
- ...and more!

\* voting privileges are currently given to women only until the FBWA updates the bylaws



**Scan to learn more on our website**  
**Cash or check made out to MBTWA\***

\*Mail in to MBT, or drop off at info desk during service. Electronic payment not available.



# Awakening to our foolish selves

*The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Dec. 14, 2025.*

**By Rev. Todd Tsuchiya**

I miss you all and thank you for allowing me to share the Dharma talk today. It's wonderful to hear Yvonne playing the piano once again. I think I can share this, but Rev. Ron is in the hospital. So, you know, I think I'm a poor substitute for him. But, please join me in gassho as I recite a passage from the Lamp for the Latter Ages. These are a collection of letters from Shinran Shonin to his followers.

*Persons of the Pure Land attain birth in the Pure Land by becoming their foolish selves. Namu Amida Butsu.*

So, today, we are commemorating Bodhi Day. And I know what you're all thinking. Isn't it wonderful that we're celebrating the life of my cat named Bodhi? Now, although, I appreciate the thought, actually this day is recognized as the day Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment while sitting beneath the Bodhi tree.

You're all probably familiar with the story of Siddhartha leaving the royal life in his family's kingdom after he encountered human suffering. Encountering the sights of old age, sickness and death and an aesthetic changed his life. He came to the realization that he lived a privileged life, being protected from seeing the realities that everyone experienced.

He understood that, essentially, all of life was suffering from want or loss. So he left his protected life to pursue his spiritual life. His deep period of meditation beneath the bodhi tree was said to have provided him insight into the true nature of reality. So "bodhi" means awakened, and he was awakened to his own ignorance—the reality of his own ego self. His discovery was not an innovative innovation of an individual but, rather, the discovery of a timeless truth.

So what did he discover?

He found the root cause of suffering and how to liberate oneself from it. He was awakened to the idea that we suffer because we cling to things—all of which are temporary in this constantly changing world.

This occurred when the Buddha was 35 years old. Fortunately for us, the Buddha decided to share his findings with his followers and, subsequently, to all of us for the remainder of his life of 45 years — until his death at the age of 80.



He taught all classes of people without making distinction between them. Without this realization, without Shakamuni Buddha's desire to teach others, we would not be together today.

So with Siddhartha's experience, we know it is possible to become a Buddha. Yet, as a human being with blind passions, I realize I am living a life where attaining an awakening like the Buddha is not possible on my own. Yet, how can I understand the awakening experience and apply it to my life?

Shinran talks about this in his letter to his followers. He says, "I recall hearing the late master Honen saying, 'Persons of the Pure Land tradition attain birth in the Pure Land by becoming their foolish selves.' Moreover, I remember him smile and say, as he watched humble people of no intellectual pretensions coming to visit him, 'Without doubt, their birth is settled.'"

"And I heard him say after a visit by a man brilliant in letters and debating, 'I really wonder about his birth.' To this day, these things come to mind."

So we often put the facade of striving on the Nembutsu path. Shinran points out that even he is one who outwardly shows how wise, virtuous and diligent he is, while inwardly cherishing vanity and falsehood.

But Shinran reminds us in his concluding remarks from the Tanisho, "I know nothing at all of good and evil. For if I could know thoroughly, as Amida Tathagata knows, that an act was good, then I would know good. If I would

know thoroughly, as Tathagata knows, that an act was evil, then I would know evil. But with a foolish being full of blind passions in this fleeting world, thought of this burning house, all matters without exception are false, poorly without truth and sincerity. The Nembutsu alone is true and real.

So maybe in our lives, it would help if we can think of the assurance of our birth as process of becoming our foolish selves. It is like an experience that gradually comes to be from the deep recesses of our heart.

Awakening is activity. It is Buddha activity.

It is not possible to notice everything on our own, trying to live in the continual awareness of Amida's compassion. It is the Buddha's activity that is making us notice. It is a gift we receive without having to initiate anything. We are made to notice that living is a function of receiving. Everything is causing us to live. We are the total of everything we have received. It is not solely our own efforts. This can be a starting point of our awakening to our foolish selves.

The deeper I reflect, the more difficult it is to draw the line between my life and the life of others. Family, my friends, pets, the sky and stars, people and things we know and don't know.

In each moment, deep interconnections between my life and that of all others, all the beings come to life. It is only then, when I am caught up in my human

*see bodhi day, page 17*

## bodhi day

*Continued from page 16*

distractions, that I lose my way. We have received nourishment—both physical and mental—through experiences with other beings so that we could live today.

As one gradually deepens awareness of the true self, the gentle awareness of the foolish beings becomes second nature and emerges with boundless compassion.

Of course, Amida's compassion was always there. But the realization of the oneness takes time just as a child learning to swim by first dipping their toe in the water.

As I reflect on the many issues related to today, I'm reminded how selfish and small-minded I am compared to the Buddha's great compassionate mind. I truly understand why Dharmakara Bodhisattva established the Primal Vow for me to be free from afflictions, pain and suffering.

As Shinran said, "When I consider deeply the vow of Amida, which rose from five kulpas of profound thought, I realize it was entirely for the sake of myself alone and how I am filled with gratitude for the Primal Vow, which is Amida Buddha's resolve to save me although I am burdened with such heavy karma."

Shinran reminds us that the object of Buddha's compassion is first directed to the self-centered beings who suffer from blind passions. Unless I become aware of my own self-centeredness, I'm not living a very authentic life and that, by seeing this, I'm stripped of my very humanity.

When we encounter the Buddha Dharma, our greed, anger and ignorance caused by our self-centered nature is revealed. The light of wisdom of the Buddha always shines upon our ego that is deep within our minds.

Yet, one might wonder how is thinking

of myself as a foolish being supposed to make me feel some level of religious joy.

There is a relationship with our awakening and our liberation. Our liberation has come about by the very fact that we cling to our blind passions. The more we are awakened to our natural state, the more we have to confess our foolish selves.

When we understand this insight, we awaken to the fact that we have been supported by Amida Buddha all along. We are made to see these events in our lives by the working of something greater than ourselves. And this can give us true joy and gratitude.

Religious joy is the joy of becoming aware of receiving the gift of wisdom and compassion working in my life. A world previously unseen is expanding our view. This is Buddha activity.

The question that frequently comes up is: What does it mean to be a Buddhist?

A better question may be to consider what does it mean to be human? Although we may have a desire or impulse to do good, we are often our own greatest stumbling blocks, the victim of our own circumstances.

But while we cannot escape the external karmic consequences of our past actions—legal, economic, social and on—this does not mean that we should punish ourselves inwardly for things that have happened in the past.

Rather, by recognizing our missteps and quirks, we open a window into our own karmic nature, without which we cannot realize Buddha nature. This is only when we realize and take ownership of the full scope of our humanity that we can see ourselves as truly fully human. Only then do we see the masks we wear, the person we show to the world.

The social effect we present to others and ourselves is only part of our story. And we can look at ourselves and others

with more humor and gentleness, with a greater sense of awareness and compassion.

As a Shin Buddhist, we are awakened to the realization that the great passion of the Tathagata embraces all equally and constantly. It is not until we awaken to ourselves, are awakening to the blind desires, accepting our focus on self-centered thinking that we can truly understand our true sense of being human and begin to live with sincerity.

We are not the Buddha beneath the bodhi tree, but we can strive to be aware of what is inside of each of us, the true nature of reality. A place to start is to work on what is inside of ourselves, to be aware of who and what we are, and how we are continuing to be an environment in society that allows hatred and violence that continues to be prominent.

I don't know what that is for each of you, but it is up to each of us to reflect and determine. Being aware of our interconnectedness involves being aware of our power beyond self, which is always nurturing and supporting us.

This power that comes beyond the ego self is provided by Amida Buddha. Limitless wisdom and compassion that benefits us all.

Naturally, gratitude wells up inside of us as we awaken to this ever-present gift. For us, in our daily lives, we can be grateful these things are in our lives and cultivate that in into the world.

In closing, I would like to reread the passage from the Lamp for the Latter Ages, letters from Shinran Shonin as he quotes from his teacher Honen. Please join me in gassho.

*Persons of the Pure Land tradition attain birth in the Pure Land by becoming their foolish selves.*

*Namu Amida Butsu.* Thank you for listening.

## gift

*Continued from page 13*

*Nanda, Upananda, and the other great nagas,  
Along with the countless naga-gods, revere  
And protect us constantly, day and night.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-but-su,"  
Yama, the king of the dead,  
reveres us,  
And the officers who judge the beings of the five courses of existence*

*All protect us constantly, day and night.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-but-su,"  
We are protected by the great king of maras  
Residing in the sixth heaven;  
This he vowed to do in the presence of Sakyamuni Buddha.*

*The gods of the heavens and earth  
Are all to be called good,  
For together they protected  
The person of the nembutsu.  
Shinjin that is the inconceivable*

*working of the power of the Vow  
Is none other than the mind  
aspiring for great enlightenment;  
The evil spirits that abound in  
heaven and earth  
All hold in awe the person who  
has attained it.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-but-su,"  
Avalokitesvara and  
Mahasthamaprapta, Together  
with bodhisattvas countless  
as the Ganges' sands or as  
particles,  
Accompany us just as shadows  
do things.*

*Countless Amida Buddhas  
reside  
In the light of the Buddha of  
Unhindered Light;  
Each one of these transformed  
Buddhas protects  
The person of true and real  
shinjin.*

*When we say "Namu-amida-but-su,"  
The countless Buddhas  
throughout the ten quarters,  
Surrounding us a hundredfold, a  
thousandfold,  
Rejoice in and protect us.*

*Namu Amida Butsu*



## happenings

*Continued from page 2*

TEATALK on Aikido & Mental Health on Feb. 7. The event will take place from 1–3 pm at Chicago Aikikai, 1444 W Chicago Ave., Chicago. **Dr. Ken Kikuchi, Bohao Zhang, Qin Coe** and MBT's own **Dwight Sora** will demonstrate the therapeutic benefits of aikido for mind and body. A bento lunch from Tanoshii Sushi will be served. More information is available on the registration page [here](#).

### JACL scholarships

The Chicago Chapter of JACL offers scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000+ to undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated a commitment to JACL's mission. Scholarships are awarded based on an applicant's understanding of and alignment with JACL's mission, as well as academic performance and extracurricular involvement. Scholarships are open to all, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Funding for scholarships is provided by generous donations from JACL Chicago members and the greater Chicago Japanese American community.

All application materials are due by email to [scholarships@jaclochicago.org](mailto:scholarships@jaclochicago.org) by 11:59 pm Central Time on Sunday, March 1, 2026. Awards will be distributed at the annual Scholarship Luncheon on Sunday, May 17, 2026. For more information and application materials, please click [here](#).

### Walk(ing) like an Egyptian

**Dan Peterson** sure knows how to live. Recently, that meant living in Egypt! "I'm on a two-week trip to Egypt," our longtime MBT friend told us. One week is on land and a Nile river cruise and another week will be scuba diving in the Red Sea.

Sounds amazing, Dan! Safe travels!

### Happy new year from Kanazawa

**Rick** and **Joyce Morimoto**, daughter **Emiko**, son-in-law **David Yarmolinsky**, and grandsons **Kohei** and **Naoki**, joined son **Kenji** and son-in-law **Will Lawrenson** in Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam during Christmas week. After that, Rick and Joyce went with Kenji and Will to Japan, where they welcomed the new year in Kanazawa. "Kenji made toshikoshi soba on New Year's Eve and Rick made ozoni for breakfast on New Year's Day," says Joyce. "After breakfast, it was time for a walk to Omiya temple for New Year's celebrations." Sounds wonderful!

### And elsewhere on the globe ...

The **Mickey Hamano** family—all 16 of them—are in the Bahamas at the Baha Marr resort. "We are avoiding the cold," says the very wise Mickey.

### Akemashite omedetō

**Kiku Taura** and **Takamasa Onose** are celebrating the new year in Japan. "It is mild weather and all the shops and restaurants are closing from Jan. 1–4, so we've stocked up on New Year's delicacies," says Kiku. It is her first time visiting Japan in the winter since 2020. "Happy New Year!"

### Giving thanks

**Carl** and **Harumi Ichikawa** were in Los Angeles for Thanksgiving with family and returned to Chicago only to learn that Harumi's mom had fallen. Off to Japan to assess, and while there learned brother-in-law **Rev. Ron** needed surgery. Returned home in time to celebrate the new year and to appreciate each day.

### Break time

The **Macri Family** rang in the new year with a family ski trip to Devil's Head in Wisconsin. The kids, **Dominick** and **Luca**, have been enjoying a break from school, and Mom and Dad (**Lisa** and **Nick**) have been enjoying the holidays with family and friends.

### Sweet viewing

We got a wonderful TV-viewing recommendation from **Christina Szabo**. "We recently watched a nice, family-friendly movie called 'The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar.' At the end, we learned that the movie was based on a **Roald Dahl** book. That made us recall other Roald Dahl books that we love, like 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,' 'Matilda' and others." Thanks, Christina!

"I recommend this movie for the message and the interesting way in which the movie appeared to be made—some people may recognize the distinctive style of the director, **Wes Anderson**. Also, this movie was pretty funny."

But wait, there's more! "The Wonderful Story Henry Sugar," which was also written and co-produced by **Anderson**, is the first of a four-part series of shorts adapted from Dahl's short stories, including "The Swan," "The Rat Catcher" and "Poison."

"Henry Sugar" is the story of a rich man learning about a clairvoyant guru who could see without using his eyes through the power of a particular form of yoga. He then sets out to master the skill in order to cheat at gambling. It stars **Benedict Cumberbatch**, with **Ralph Fiennes**, **Dev Patel**, **Ben Kingsley** and **Richard Ayoade**.

### Sad news

It is with deep sadness that we learned of the passing of **Rev. Carol Myokai Himaka**, BCA Minister Emeritus. Rev. Himaka passed away on Dec. 6, at the age of 73. Throughout her ministry, Rev. Himaka served at the Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple, San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, Buddhist Temple of Marin, Enmanji Buddhist Temple, Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church, and Palo Alto Buddhist Temple.

Rev. Himaka also served as director of the BCA's Department of Buddhist Education. Rev. Himaka is survived by her siblings, **Gary (Karen) Himaka**, **Norman (Kathy) Himaka**, and **Lynn (Stephen) Fuchigami**. A funeral service, co-officiated by the Buddhist Churches of America and the Buddhist Temple of San Diego, will be held on Jan. 23, 2026 at 11 am at the Buddhist Temple of San Diego, 2929 S. Main Street, San Diego, Calif. 92102.

Expressions of condolence may sent to Mrs. Lynn Fuchigami, 13956 Chancellor Way, Poway, Calif. 92064.

For those who are not able to attend

in person, the service will also be available to watch on [YouTube](#).

\*\*\*

We were also deeply saddened to learn of the passing of **Marsha Aizumi**. Even through her illness, she shared her hope and courage

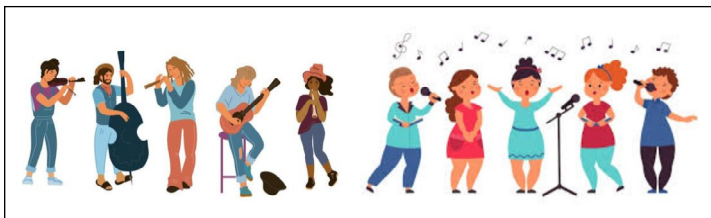


with others. She was a tireless advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, founder of Okaeri, loving parent and generous mentor. Many considered her a second mother. When MBT formed the Niji Dharma group, she shared her time and advice with us. We grieve the news of her passing while also being joyfully inspired by her life and work. You can read more about Marsha [here](#).

### Happy birthday to...

We would like to send happy birthday wishes to other friends born in the month of January:

**Jerry Matsumoto**, Jan. 16  
**Takamasa Onose**, Jan. 28



# Musicians, singers: Come join the MBT Band

By Joy Zavala

Calling all musicians and singers: The MBT Band is recruiting new members. If you play an instrument and/or would like to participate as a singer, please sign up [here](#) or on the singup sheet on the MBT

Bulletin Board in the Social Hall.

The MBT Band will perform in upcoming services and events. Scheduling will be based on musician/singer availability.

So, if you would like to share your talents and be a part of the band, please sign up.

## Jan. 27, 2017: Martin Luther King Jr.

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

By Rev. Bob Oshita

When I had just turned 15, Dr. King led the March on Washington. What he said that day has continued to echo loudly in the hearts and minds of all those with the courage to hear. As a college student in the late '60s, I consider myself fortunate to have been a part of a generation that was able to hear what might be considered a revolutionary call for nothing more than human decency. And although Dr. King was taken from us in April of 1968, we must continue to share his wonderful dream.

As we remember a man who championed the rights of all people and embraced diversity, we remember his dream and we celebrate our shared humanity.

Today, let us gather in gratitude for a man who held high the banner of human dignity.

In remembering Dr. King, we must all continue to try to have the courage to dream. As he said that day in Washington in August of 1963, " ... all life is interrelated. All humanity is involved in a single process, and all men are brothers. To the degree that I harm my brother, no matter what he is doing to me, to that extent I am harming myself."

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

## January 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 January, and who we will remember during the MBT service on Jan. 4. To add a family member, please contact the MBT Office.

January			
1928	Tetsuo Takaki	1997	Miyako Matsuki
1936	Suye Nakamoto	1999	Dawn Carroll
1937	Torakichi Shoji		Masahiko Fujisawa
	Inosuke Yasukawa		George Watanuki
1942	Mas Robert Hayashi	2000	George Asakura
1944	Yasutaro Nishikawa		John Isoda
1945	Yasuko Umeki	2001	William Katahira
1946	Tadao Miyata		Masanobu Kobata
1950	Frank Kinoshita		Toyoho Furuta
1952	Fusae Taguchi	2002	Dr. Masaro Harada
1954	Yoshio Terao		George Tanaka
1959	Chonosuke Hayashi	2003	David Yoshimura
1960	Fred Toguri	2004	Fumiye Iwana
1961	Hisao Nishimura		Dane Asakura
1964	Kumataro Migaki		James "Jimbo" Hamano
1966	Yukino Horita	2005	Kazuyoshi Hino
	Tomo Yasukawa		Bill Adachi
1968	Yoshio Takaki		Kiyoko Sonoda
1971	Kaneyo Kawamoto	2006	Steven Yamashita
	Edward Schroeter	2007	Charles Shishida
1972	Hana Sugiyama	2008	Hiromi Kamihana
1973	H. Hong Chen	2009	Thomas Honda Sr.
	Eiju Tokunaga	2010	Carl H. Muraoka
1974	Genji Yagi		Aki Nishimura
1976	Suyeno Yoshimura		Judy Yoshia
1977	Clarence S. Nakamura	2011	Imanaka
1980	Matsu Okumura	2012	Osamu Ueda
	Yutaka Yasutake	2014	Yoshiko Toyama
1982	Naka Hagio	2015	Harumi Sakoda
1983	Sumio Nishi	2016	Mitsuo Fujishima
1984	Motoji Wakasa		Susan Steel Ishida
1985	Miye Maekawa		Tsuneo Moriki
	Joseph M. Voos	2017	Masato Ozaki
1987	Hideko Okazaki	2018	Alice Yamamoto
1988	Kiyoko Nakamura	2019	Edith Morimoto
1989	Gary Hagio		Misui Miyata
	Kotora Teshima		Akiye Nakayama
	George Sugano		Mitsuo Ono
1990	Misao Hosaka	2020	Jiro Sakamoto
	Kisa Wakabayashi	2021	Brian Taketa
1991	Yoshio Tanabe		Stuart G. Terusaki
1992	Joe Minoru Migaki	2022	Mary Fujii
1993	Akiko Ichikawa		Yukio Isoye
	John Dunleavy		Harry Yoshihara
1994	Mas Uyeda	2023	Mae Imaoka
	Jane Shizue Fujimoto		Ronald Frederickson
	Sachiko Yasunaga	2024	Alan Omori
1996	Fujiye Naito	2025	Michael Imanaka
			Shigeo Ito
			Joy Akiko Okayama





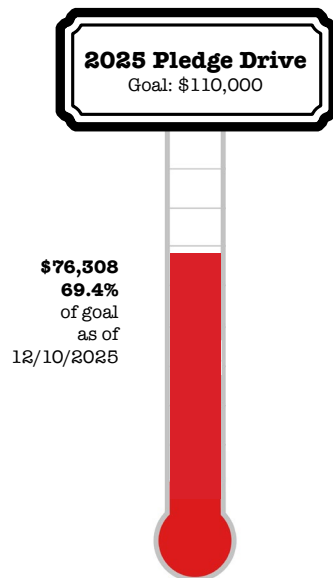
## MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE 2025 PLEDGE DRIVE

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/](http://mbtchicago.org/join-support/donate-now/); look for the purple "Donate Now."

**DONATE NOW**

### 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



# domo

The Midwest Buddhist Temple gratefully acknowledges the following donations received between **Nov. 13 and Dec. 16.**

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.

### Sogi Memorial

Hiroko & Max Warshauer (in memory of Suzuko Kawaguchi)

### Memorial Donations

Carol Baba  
Carol Hazlewood  
Bernard Josefsberg & Tae Terumoto  
Susan Kahn  
Alan & Gwen Kato  
Evelyn Mayblum  
Cody Patterson  
Miriam Rosenbush  
Mark Umekubo  
Janet Zipser

### November Memorial

Phyllis Aragaki  
Steve Arima & Elaine Ogawa  
Mark & Susan Brown  
Terry Cichocki  
Allison Hagio & Michael Conwell  
Dr. Michael & Yvonne Harada  
Dianne Ichishita  
Helen & Kaz Ideno  
Gale Kono  
Rev. Ron & Elaine Miyamura  
Victor & Sandy Miyata  
Dr. Rick & Joyce Morimoto  
Roger & Arlene Suekama  
Jennifer Toguri  
Jeanne & David Toguri  
Teri Yasunaga-Blasco  
Joy Zavala

Fanli Zhao

### December Memorial

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Kathy Isoda  
Michael Nishi & Angela Konishi  
Judy & Wayne Matsuyama  
Susan Mitsunaga  
Rev. Ron & Elaine Miyamura  
Victor & Sandy Miyata  
Dr. Rick & Joyce Morimoto  
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Dennis & Pam Teshima  
Nadine Tono  
Gary Tsuchiyama  
Bruce Yahiro  
Tommy Yamashita  
Joy Zavala

### January Memorial

Dr. Emiko Morimoto  
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Dr. Rick & Joyce Morimoto  
Derek & Kristine Provo  
Blackwelder  
Taura & Tsuchiya Families  
Dr. Leslie Yamamoto & Gordon Purtell

### Rev. Kono Fund

Carl & Harumi Ichikawa  
Ron Kono

### Legacy Garden

Terry Cichocki

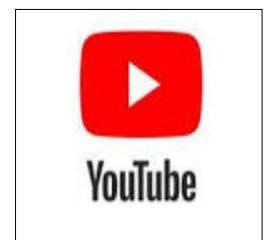
*see Domo, Page 21*

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

We have moved our YouTube channel to a new location: [youtube.com/mbtchicago-youtube](https://youtube.com/mbtchicago-youtube).

Here you can view Dharma messages from the comfort of your home. We keep about 12 months of the latest videos online.

If you have any questions just drop us a note at [youtube.admin@mbtchicago.org](mailto:youtube.admin@mbtchicago.org). So check out our channel and become a subscri-ber by



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# 10 years of sandwich-making for the unhoused

By Joy Zavala

**W**e had our last Sandwich-Making Homeless Project of the year on Dec. 27, and this completes 10 years.

Over 300 sandwiches were delivered that were either made at volunteers' homes or here at the temple. Since the tent city near Des Plaines and Kinzie is gone, we delivered the sandwiches to Sarah's Circle, North Side Housing for Men and Lincoln Park Community Services.

We also delivered so many warm accessories, coats and blankets that had been donated by our generous Sangha members, and LPCS was very grateful for everything.

Thanks to our sandwich-makers, bag-fillers and donation-sorters today, and all of the people who filled our clothing bin to the brim.



Photos by Joy Zavala

Volunteers get winter gear and sandwiches ready for delivery.



## domo

*Continued From Page 20*

Jean Inouye  
Debra Levie  
Jeanne & David Toguri  
Jennifer Toguri

### **Pledge / Membership**

Stacy Arima Castillo  
John Barnes  
Mark & Susan Brown  
Lisa Doi

Nicholas T. Geovanis  
Joyce & Mark Ishida  
Brian Key  
Marshall Kubota  
Elaine Matsushita & Bob Sutter  
Cynthia Mee  
Sharon Miyata-Sipich  
Michael Omori  
Dianne Pape  
Derek & Kristine Provo  
Blackwelder  
Susan & Robert Rakstang  
Kenneth Russell

Kaye Shinozaki  
Roger & Arlene Suekama  
Rich Taura  
Jennifer Toguri  
Keith Voos  
Ken Yamamoto  
Joy Zavala

### **Special Donations**

Kathy Aragaki-Van Horn  
Hannah Carson  
Jiuqing Cheng  
Dermot Edgcombe  
Naomi Hoover

Dean Katahira  
Naoki Nakashima  
Marie Ochi-Jacobs  
Chika Sekiguchi  
Robin Wylie

~~~~~

*If you have arranged donations through a giving fund or automatic payment, please ensure that your name is included so that we can properly record and acknowledge them.*



## save the dates

**JAN 11** Come learn about "3 Japanese Artists." Debra Levie will present a slide program featuring Leonard Foujita, Yasuo Kuniyoshi and Henry Sugimoto.

**Time:** 11:30 am (after Sunday service). **Location:** MBT. **Cost:** Free. **More information:** Sign up online or contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

**JAN 24** Join us for our first Homeless Project sandwich-making day of 2026. This is a hybrid event with sandwiches either made at the temple or 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:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801, if you would like to participate.

**JAN 25** Please join us on for our Annual Membership Meeting immediately after service. You will hear from our Board of Trustees President Jason Matsumoto and others on the temple's 2025 accomplishments and plans for 2026. Voting members will be asked to ratify the 2026 Operating Budget.

Following the meeting will be our Shinnen Enkai, or New Year Party, where lunch will be served along with entertainment.

**Time:** After Sunday service. **Location:** Membership Meeting in hondo; Shinnen-enkai in Social Hall. **Tickets:** \$10, adults; \$5, children 10 and younger. Tickets can be purchased at the temple or by contacting the temple office, 312.943.7801. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

**FEB 1** Come fill your tummy and warm up at our Sangha Appreciation Soup Bar. Get to know members of the MBT Board of Trustees, who will be hosting the event, and warm up with a hot bowl of soup. All ingredients to add to the soup will be provided by our board members.

**Time:** 11:30 am (after Sunday service). **Location:** Social Hall. **Cost:** Free. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

**FEB 1** We will be selling wonderful baked goods during the Sangha Appreciation Soup Bar. Please consider donating baked goods and/or purchasing some to support the temple's Outreach projects.

**Time:** 11:30 am (after Sunday service). **Location:** Social Hall. **More information:** Contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

# JAN

at midwest buddhist temple

**4**  
SUNDAY  
10:30 am Monthly Memorial Service / Ellen Dunleavy

**11**  
SUNDAY  
10:30 am Family Service / Rev. Patti Kanaya

**18**  
SUNDAY  
10:30 am Ho-onko Service /

**24**  
SATURDAY  
Noon/1 pm Homeless Project Sandwich-Making (*see details at left*)

**25**  
SUNDAY  
10:30 am Shinnen-Enkai Service  
11:30 am Annual General Meeting, followed by Shinnen-Enkai luncheon/ party



Clayton Hamano - President

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