

The Newsletter of Ekoji Buddhist Temple

Kalavinka

Fairfax Station, Virginia – Established 1981

Vol. XXXIII, No. 9

September 2014

84,000 Thoughts - Welcome Bishop Umezu!

By Rev. Kurt Rye

As you will read this edition of the Kalavinka, the Ekoji Sangha has just successfully finished hosting the Eastern Buddhist League Conference. We were able to share a stimulating and rewarding holiday weekend with other temple members of our Eastern BCA district and Eastern Canada. This was a wonderful opportunity to listen to the Buddhist teachings with our Dharma friends from both the United States and Canada.

We will have another opportunity to share the Dharma when Ekoji will hold its fall seminar on October 4th. We are most fortunate to have BCA Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu lead this seminar. His topic will be *Take Refuge in the Light of Joy*. I have known Rev. Umezu for many years and have enjoyed many of his excellent workshops and Dharma talks. I know we will all look forward to his presentation, which will no doubt be insightful, humorous, and relevant.

Rev. Umezu will also be conducting the Kie Shiki, an affirmation service, the following day at the combined service. This service commemorates the event when Sakyamuni Buddha passed on his teachings, Dharma transmission, to his disciples. After his death, these disciples, in turn, passed on these teachings to their disciples. This transmission of the Dharma continues to the present day. This is

how the Dharma teachings have been passed down for centuries from person to person. From its beginnings in India, it now spans the entire world.

We at the Ekoji Temple are part of that Dharma transmission. Our school of Buddhism comes from the teaching of Shinran Shonin (1173-1262). He, in turn, was the disciple of Master Honen (1133-1212) who received his Dharma lineage from the Tendai School, which had a centuries old tradition before it made its way to Japan from China. The Dharma

teachings of Jodo Shinshu were transmitted from Japan to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century and reached the Washington (DC) Metropolitan area in 1960.

The role of Bishop in the BCA organization is part of that historic link.

While our Bishop is elected at our National Convention, he is, at the same time, the direct representative of the Gomonsu of the Hongwanji. The Gomonsu is a direct descendent of Shinran Shonin and spiritual leader of our Jodo Shinshu school of Buddhism.

I hope you will all attend the seminar and the combined service and take the opportunity to meet Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu and take part of the Dharma transmission that has been ongoing for more than 2600 years.



In this issue:

Sangha News and Events
Ekoji President's Message

Page 2
Page 2

BCA Voices
Dana List

Page 3
Page 4

Sangha News and Events

September and Future Events

September 14:

- 9:00 AM: Religious Committee Meeting
- 11:00 AM: Regular Service

September 16:

- 10:00 AM: Oasaji Service

September 19-21:

- MAP Session, New York Buddhist Church

September 21:

- 11:00 AM: Regular Service

September 28:

- 9:30 AM: Temple Clean-Up
- 10:00 AM: Dharma School Welcome Brunch
- 11:00 AM: Shuki Higan-E Joint Service, Autumn Equinox
- 12:30 PM: Board Meeting

October 4:

- Fall Seminar, Reverend Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

October 5:

- Kieshiki (Affirmation) Ceremony by Reverend Kodo Umezu

November 16:

- Pet Memorial Service

December 7:

- Bodhi Day Service

December 31:

- New Year's Eve Service

In-kind Donations and Thanks

Thank you to the following individuals who donated their time and skills to help out the temple:

- Kalavinka Editor: Andrea Walter
- Dharma School: Maya Horio, Superintendent, and all our volunteer teachers
- Office Management: Jane Blechman.
- Wisteria Lane: Heidi Forrest

- Temple Supplies: Nora Nagatani
- Onaijin Set-Up and Clean-Up: Minister's Assistants and Heidi Forrest under the leadership of Erick Ishii and Rob Fike
- Dharma Talk Recordings: Michael Galvin
- Hondo Clean-Up: All of our Sangha Members
- After-service refreshments: Thank you to all who contributed refreshments, prepared coffee and tea, and cleaned up afterward! A special thank you to Erni Diez-Fugitt and Ann and John Ishikawa for coordinating refreshments.
- Thank you to those who volunteered to be service leaders, rang the kansho, and helped collect dana.
- Thank you to Heidi Forrest for maintaining the Three Treasures Garden. Heidi welcomes any Sangha member interested in helping her with Garden upkeep.
- Thank you to Bob Shimokaji for maintaining the Ekoji facilities.

My apologies if we missed any names. We are, indeed, fortunate to have so many volunteers assisting with Temple activities. Laverne Imori

Sangha Member News

- Congratulations to Gail and Norman Kondo on the August 4th birth of grandson #3, Trent Hiroyuki Higuchi who entered the world at 8 pounds, 20 inches.
- So wonderful to have Truc Vo back at Ekoji during her summer break. She's back at UVA now, but we had the pleasure of seeing her at the EBL Conference.
- Our condolences to Brian Nagata of BDK America on the loss of his father, Tom, on August 15th.

Please submit news such as special honors or awards, weddings, births, graduations, etc., to Laverne Imori at limori@comcast.net, so we can share with the Sangha.

Ekoji President's Message - Flourishing as a Sangha

By: Laverne Shidou Imori

As I write this message, the EBL (Eastern Buddhist League) Conference hosted by Ekoji, has come to a successful close. Just a few weeks ago, one might imagine that everyone on the organizing committee would have been in freak out mode, but, amazingly, what I noted at the final meeting before the conference was a sense of calm and confidence. I believe the reason is due to the efforts of the Ekoji Sangha and the participation of the Sangha members from the other EBL temples.

This has been yet another wonderful opportunity to

experience the teaching of interdependence and experience the rewards of being part of a Sangha. Without the efforts of so many, we would not have been able to make this conference a reality.

Thank you to the 2014 EBL Steering Committee. We have flourished as a team to ensure the success of this event. We shared ideas (not always agreeing), formulated and executed plans – each person working hard and putting in long hours despite other personal commit-

Continued on page 3.

BCA Voices - How Full is Your Teacup?

By Rev. Ron Miyamura

The ministers of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) have important lessons to share with us. Through this column, we would like to share many of those lessons with the readers of the Kalavinka. The following article appeared in the March 2014 Midwest Buddhist Temple newsletter, Bulletin, and was written by Rev. Ron Miyamura.

Many years ago in Japan, there was a famous monk in Kyoto, and one of the members of his temple was a rich and successful businessman. As the rich merchant was getting older, he started to think about his own life and his own death. And so he made an appointment to meet with the famous head priest.

On the day of his appointment, the merchant dressed in his best clothes and went to the temple. He knocked on the door and was shown into a small room with just a simple table. He was told the head priest would see him soon.

But as the rich merchant waited and waited, he grew impatient. Soon he was demanding to see the head priest immediately since he was a big donor and was a successful merchant who did not have time to just wait.

After making fuss after fuss, the priest finally entered the room. He was carrying a small tray with a small teapot and two cups.

The priest sat down, bowed politely and said, "First, we should have some tea."

But the rich merchant demanded in a bellowing voice, "I am a big donor to this temple, and I have been kept waiting for a long time. I just wanted a few minutes to know the meaning of life. And I was told you were a wise and learned priest who could teach me the meaning of life."

Again, the priest simply said, "First, we should have some tea."

The priest put a cup in front of the rich merchant, and started to pour some tea. And he poured...and he poured. Soon the teacup was overflowing, and the tea was spilling out onto the table.

The rich merchant saw what was happening and got all excited and shouted at the priest, "You are making a mess! Can't you see the cup is full and no more tea will go in?" The priest smiled, and simply said, "The teacup is like you. It is so full of itself that nothing more can go in. [End of story.]

We have to ask ourselves if we are like a full teacup and think we know it all, thus nothing more can come in. Or are we an empty teacup willing to accept new and interesting thoughts and ideas. For the rich merchant, he was so full of himself and his own self-importance, he could never empty himself enough to let the BuddhaDharma enter his life. He did not have the patience to listen to the Dharma. He expected the priest to share his wisdom in just a few minutes.

For Wisdom and Compassion to enter our lives, we have to be an empty teacup.

The sign at the back of the Midwest Temple that we see as we enter and come down the stairs says; "Come as you are." And it has my name at the bottom. While I have often said that phrase, it is not original to me. But it is a reminder that we come to the Midwest Buddhist Temple, just as we are...and we want to be the empty teacup so that we can be filled with Wisdom and Compassion.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Ekaji President's Message - Flourishing as a Sangha

Continued from page 2.

ments. You are all awesome!

Thank you, Reverend Kurt, for your leadership and enthusiasm. This has been an incredible year (it's not over yet!) and I appreciate your guidance and coaching more than words can express.

Thank you, Ekaji Board of Directors, for agreeing to host this year's conference on short notice and for supporting the activities of the Steering Committee.

Thank you, Ekaji Sangha, for your generosity and volunteering your time to help so soon after O-Bon – no rest for the weary. We could not pull this off without you.

Finally, thank you, conference participants for trav-

eling from Toronto, Seabrook, New York, Cleveland, and Chicago to share this Dharma experience with us. We are grateful you are taking the time and making the financial commitment to travel to D.C. We look forward to conversations about how we can flourish at the individual, Sangha and District levels in our common goal to share the gift of the Three Treasures – the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Welcome back to Ekaji, Dharma School students, parents and teachers! We will be glad to see you again at the end of this month.

With much gratitude and in gassho, Laverne

Ekoji Dana List - August 2014

*Michelle Amano
Andrew Barden
Gordon Bermant
Jane Blechman
Rosemary Burke
Rie Buzzelli
Laura Clapsaddle
Jussara Cohen
Latanya Colbert-Martin
Nen Daiko
Erni Diez-Fugitt
Rob Fike
Heidi Forrest
Peter Goleboski
Thomas Griffin
Susan Grimes
Rev. Shoji Honda
Yonekazu Horita
Emily Ihara
Laverne Imori
Susan Kasa
Norm and Gail Kondo
Rachael Lang-Harris
Mark LaWall
Sandra Lukic-Dapoingy
Reiko and Hisao Matsumoto
Olivia McGraw*

*Bert and Nancy Montonga
Ron and Nora Nagatani
Mark Nagy
Kennon and Noriko
Nakamura
Lisa and Greg Nakamura
Kim Nguyen
Rei and Paul Noguchi
Nancy Okada
Stuart Ott
Rebecca Perry
Paul Q. Piper
Art Politano
William Robertson
Curtis Rothrock
Ed Sams
Kikuno Sato
Bob Shimokaji
Ajit and Samantha Silva
Shigeki Sugiyama
John Sutch
Frank Swithers
Hidesuke Takai
Anna Tecsdon
Allen A. Thomsen
Ngoc-Yen Vu
Shigeko Walton*

Kalavinka

Managing Editor: Andrea A. Walter

Assistant Editors: Rev. Kurt Rye,
Ken Nakamura, Laverne Imori

Sangha members and community businesses can publish **advertisements in Kalavinka**. Please contact us for information!

Kalavinka is published by the Ekoji Buddhist Temple, 6500 Lake Haven Lane, Fairfax Station, VA 22039, (703) 239-0500
www.ekoji.org

Join us at Ekoji!

Adult Service: Sundays at 11 a.m.

Meditation: Thursdays at 8 p.m.

Yoga: Mondays at 7:30 p.m.

Children's Dharma School (Sept. through June):
10 a.m. family service and 11 a.m. classes

Consult the Ekoji website for the complete event calendar at www.ekoji.org.



EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
6500 Lake Haven Lane
Fairfax Station, VA 22039

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS