

MAY 2025

KALAVINKA

A NEWSLETTER OF EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GOTAN E – CELEBRATING SHINRAN SHONIN'S BIRTHDAY



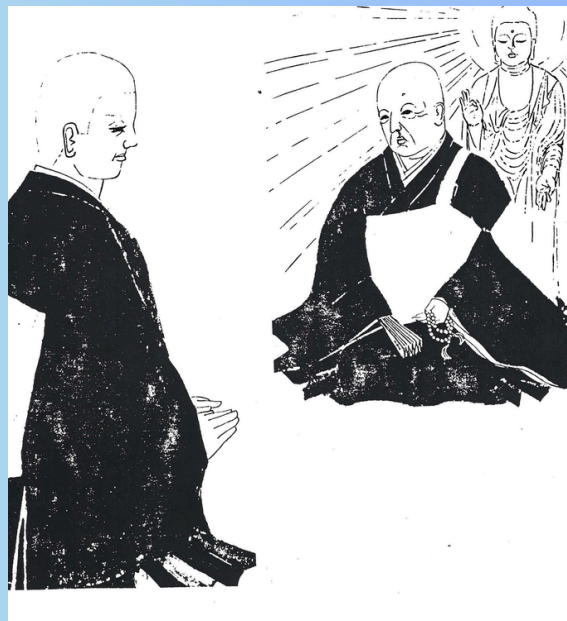
Shinran's practice on Mt Hiei

BECOMING A TENDAI NOVICE PRIEST AT THE AGE OF 9, SHINRAN, THEN CALLED HANNEN, WORKED AND STUDIED HARD, AS WELL AS PRACTICING THE RITUALS DILIGENTLY AT THE MONASTERIES ON MT. HIEI FOR 20 YEARS.

HOWEVER, HE FELT GREAT PERSONAL FRUSTRATION AS HE BELIEVED HE WAS NO CLOSER TO THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING HE SOUGHT THAN WHEN HE FIRST BECAME A NOVICE PRIEST.

HE LEFT THE MONASTERIES OF MT. HIEI AND THE TENDAI PRACTICES, AND SOUGHT PRIEST HONEN, WHOM HE HAD BEEN HEARING ABOUT.

HE MET PRIEST HONEN, AND AFTER LISTENING TO HIM FOR OVER 100 DAYS, ASKED HONEN TO ACCEPT HIM AS A DISCIPLE . THUS BEGAN HIS AND OUR JOURNEY ON THE NEMBUTSU PATH.



Shinran studying with Honen

WITH DEEPEST GASSHO TO SHINRAN SHONIN



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84,000 THOUGHTS

THE SHOSHIN NEMBUTSU GE

By Rev. Kurt Rye

***The light of compassion that grasps and protects us always;
The darkness of our ignorance is already broken through;
Still the clouds and mists of greed and desire, anger and hatred,
Cover as always the sky of true and real Shinjin.***

***Shoshin Nembutsu Ge
Shinran Shonin***

When encountering individuals unfamiliar with Buddhism, I am frequently requested to explain the various schools and the historical origins of Ekoji. Ekoji is a Buddhist temple affiliated with the Jodo Shinshu lineage. This school was established by Shinran Shonin, a Japanese Buddhist monk who lived from 1173 to 1263.

At the time of his passing, he did not recognize his teachings as the foundation of a distinct school, but rather as a refinement of his master Honen's teachings of Pure Land Buddhism. During this period in Japanese Buddhist history, numerous Buddhist leaders interpreted Buddhism in a manner that was accessible and practicable for the average individual amidst their daily lives. The need to take monastic vows and depart from the everyday world and their families had diminished.

Shinran dedicated the final two decades of his life in Kyoto to seclusion, away from his family, to immerse himself in the sutras and texts essential for his literary work on the classification of Pure Land Buddhism. This seminal work, titled the Kyogyoshinsho (The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way), was intended for fellow Buddhist practitioners possessing an understanding of Buddhist doctrines and proficiency in Chinese. With meticulous dedication, Shinran systematically organized diverse Buddhist teachings by employing numerous sutras and commentaries. This meticulous process enabled him to trace the origins of Pure Land Buddhist thought throughout the centuries and across different cultures.

In contrast, Shinran deliberately composed one section in Japanese as a manifestation of his gratitude towards the Buddha. Additionally, his comprehension of fundamental principles within Pure Land Buddhism is in a concise poetic composition. This is commonly referred to as the Shoshin Ge, which I have quoted at the commencement of this article.

The Shoshin Ge, widely recognized as the most pivotal chant within the Jodo Shinshu school, underwent a transformation during the 15th century. Initially composed as a poem, it was subsequently transformed into the chant we are familiar with today. This chant continues to be recited daily at our head temple, Hongwanji in Kyoto. Its profound significance extends to the fact that all future ministers of Nishi Hongwanji are required to memorize the twenty-minute chant as a prerequisite for ordination.

The Shoshinge commences, as many Buddhist commentaries do, with Shinran expressing his profound reverence for Amida Buddha and Sakyamuni Buddha. The document proceeds with Shinran's commentary on the seven Pure Land masters who transmitted the teachings from the era of the historical Buddha Sakyamuni. These masters include Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu from India, Tan Luan, Tao-ch'o, and Shan Tao from China, and finally, Genshin and Honen from Japan. Shinran emphasizes the profound significance of each master's teachings in elucidating our comprehension of the Pure Land path.

By reciting or chanting this sutra, we can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the profound devotion of our school's founder, Shinran Shonin, and the culmination of countless years of research and unwavering dedication that culminated in its creation.

***The light of compassion that grasps and protects us always;
The darkness of our ignorance is already broken through;
Still the clouds and mists of greed and desire, anger and hatred,
Cover as always the sky of true and real Shinjin.***

**Shoshin Nembutsu Ge
Shinran Shonin**

This passage elucidates the Pure Land doctrine, which posits that the universal compassion and enlightenment embodied by Amida Buddha facilitate our transcendence of spiritual ignorance, which manifests in our attachments of greed, desire, anger, and hatred. By embracing the radiance of our inherent, Buddha nature, we attain Shinjin.

**EKOJI'S VIRTUAL "DHARMA BREEZE" PROGRAM OF A SERVICE AND
DISCUSSION WITH REV. KURT RYE WILL BE HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING,
AT 7:00 PM.**



WEDNESDAYS
7 PM ET
EKOJI.ORG

**DHARMA BREEZE WILL INCLUDE: 3-MINUTE MEDITATION, CHANTING, DHARMA MESSAGE AND A
SHORT DISCUSSION.**

RSVP FOR THE ZOOM INFO USING THIS LINK:

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZMLCOGSQT0TGDIRTNNT5EYDBZXK9F2OVZJO](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tzmlcogsqt0tgdirtnt5eydbzxk9f2ovzjo)



A TAPESTRY OF GRATITUDE: OUR SHARED EKOJI JOURNEY

By: Andrea Chapman

With a sense of renewal and reflection, I find myself filled with profound gratitude for the rich tapestry that is Ekoji Buddhist Temple. It is a tapestry woven with the threads of history, dedication, and above all, the unwavering spirit of our Sangha (community) which is beautifully conveyed in a Japanese song by the same name and presented here by our former minister, Rev. Nariaki Hayashi, and his family.

For many years, the light of the Dharma has shone brightly here in Fairfax Station, Virginia, offering a sanctuary for spiritual growth, connection, and the sharing of the Jodo Shinshu path. Our beginnings were humble yet filled with a deep yearning and a touch of serendipity. A small group of dedicated individuals were drawn together by a common desire to share with their young children and with others, the teaching of Siddhartha and Shinran Shonin, and the temple rituals, values, and customs they had learned as they, themselves, were growing up. They envisioned a place where the Nembutsu could resonate and where the warmth of community could blossom.

Through their tireless efforts and the unwavering compassion, guidance and support of both Rev. Kenryu Tsuji and Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata, Ekoji Buddhist Temple as we know it today came into being. They navigated challenges, poured their hearts into establishing this space, and laid the foundation upon which we convene today. Their vision, their perseverance, and their profound gratitude for the Dharma are the very roots of our temple.

Today, Ekoji continues to thrive, guided by the same spirit of dedication and sustained largely by the incredible generosity of our volunteer community. It is truly humbling to witness the countless hours, the diverse talents, and the unwavering commitment that our volunteers pour into every aspect of Ekoji's functioning. From the care of our grounds and facilities to the heartfelt organization of our services and events, from the quiet dedication of our board members to the welcoming smiles of those who greet us. Ekoji is, at its heart, a testament to the power of collective effort.

Behind the scenes, our temple operates with a thoughtful administrative structure, designed to ensure the smooth flow of our activities and the responsible stewardship of our resources. Our elected Board of Directors, comprised entirely of dedicated volunteers, provides leadership and guidance, working diligently to uphold the mission and vision of Ekoji. Various initiatives, also powered by volunteers, focus on specific areas such as membership, education, fundraising, and community outreach, each contributing to the well-being of our temple.

(Tapestry, Cont. on Pg 4)

It is important to remember that Ekoji is not an island unto itself. We are deeply connected to the broader Shin Buddhist community through our affiliation with Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and, in turn, the Buddhist Digital Library of America (BDK America). These affiliations provide us with invaluable resources, guidance, and a sense of belonging to a larger Buddhist community. The BCA offers a framework of support, connecting temples across the country, sharing best practices, and providing opportunities for collective learning and growth, which you can learn more about in this thoughtful [video](#). BDK America, with its commitment to the dissemination of Buddhist teachings through digital resources, further enriches our understanding and access to the profound wisdom of the Dharma and has long provided pertinent resources for Ekoji's continued operations.

As we move forward, let us hold in our hearts a deep sense of gratitude – for the efforts of our founders, for the selfless dedication of our countless volunteers, and for the enduring connection we share through the BCA and BDK America. It is through this collective gratitude, this shared commitment, that Ekoji Buddhist Temple continues to be a beacon of peace, understanding, and the boundless compassion of Amida Buddha



*11-4-78 Planning Session to Start a Dharma School
with 7 families*



Ekoji Sangha in 2022

In Gassho, Namo Amida Butsu

JOIN OUR TEMPLE

THE EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE THE TEMPLE OF THE GIFT OF LIGHT

We are committed to growing a worldwide Sangha and invite you to join our diverse community. Explore the benefits of membership by visiting our membershiip portal at: <http://ekojobuddhisttemple.wildapricot.org>

ALL OUR WELCOME -- COME AS YOU ARE

ON HANAMATSURI, EKOJI CELEBRATES THE BIRTH OF SIDDHARTHA – THE FUTURE BUDDHA

By Ken Nakamura



With the Dharma School children's procession to present flowers to the baby Buddha, and the pouring of sweet tea over the statue of the baby Buddha inside a traditional, Hanamido, Ekoji began its annual Hanamatsuri Service on April 6, to celebrate the birth of the historical Buddha some 2,600 years ago in beautiful Lumbini Garden.

Minister's Assistant Truc Vo presided over the Hybrid Hanamatsuri Service, and Minister's Assistant with Ordination, Rev. Erick Ishii, gave the Dharma message. They were assisted by Minister's Assistant Rob Fike, while Pilar Uleman chaired the special service.



Because many in our Sangha are relatively new, or were with us to "kick the proverbial tires of Buddhism," Rev. Ishii (Erick) began his Dharma message by briefly explaining the birth

legend of Siddhartha and talked about the symbolism of joy and the meaning of what they had seen with the Hanamido, the flowers, and the pouring of the sweet tea.

And at these times, he said, it is appropriate to think about the teachings that Siddhartha, the Buddha, shared with us starting those 2600 years ago.

Rev. Ishii, an Epidemiologist with the government, talked about how at work, "there was not a time I didn't encounter individuals who were experiencing significant stress due to factors like a heavy work load due to staff shortages, and challenges in balancing one's personal and professional life. With recent layoffs and job insecurity in the government, mental health among the staff have further been exacerbated with feelings of anxiety and burnout."

As he talked to associates and as they discussed their concerns, he said it made me "think about how I was interacting with them, and the profound significance between hearing and listening."

Rev. Ishii said the distinction between hearing and listening is central to our spiritual practice, particularly in the context of deep listening to the Dharma. Those practicing deep listening emphasize not just the act of perceiving sound, but the transformative process of internalizing and embodying the teachings of the Buddha. This understanding leads to a profound sense of gratitude and trust in the Dharma.

(Hanamatsuri, Cont. on Pg.6)

He compares deep listening in Jodo Shin Buddhism to smoking or marinating meat. The teaching will gradually infuse into our beings over time, even if the meaning isn't immediately clear; repeated listening allows the Dharma to permeate our hearts and minds. And as we interact with friends, colleagues, neighbors or acquaintances, who may be going through severe stress, we might take the time to talk and truly listen to the person.

Rev. Ishii concluded his Dharma message with a quote by Thich Nhat Hanh,

You can practice deep listening in order to relieve the suffering in us and in the other person. That kind of listening is described as compassionate listening. You listen only for the purpose of relieving suffering in the other person.

The service concluded with the Gatha by the late Linda Castro, "A Flower Grows", the pouring of sweet tea over the baby Buddha by the Sangha, and closing Gassho.

Namo Amida Butsu

Ekoji's Hanamatsuri Service can be seen at :

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7405354/video/1072988126>

EKOJI TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2025 WORLDPRIDE PARADE in Washington D.C. on June 7th, 2025



This reflects Ekoji's deep commitment to the Buddhist Churches of America's (BCA) tradition of recognizing unions in all forms, and it aligns perfectly with Ekoji Buddhist Temple's welcoming motto, "Come as you are."

We believe this is a powerful opportunity to demonstrate our values of inclusiveness, compassion, and loving-kindness to the wider community.

We envision our members of Ekoji's Sangha marching mindfully and compassionately in the parade, carrying a banner that proudly represents Ekoji.

This is a chance for Ekoji to shine as a beacon of acceptance and understanding. Our participation is part of a decades-long role that BCA has played in supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

COME JOIN US IN D.C. ON JUNE 7TH FOR THE WORLD PRIDE PARADE



UPON THEIR SHOULDERS EKOJI'S PAST -- OUR PRESENT *NAMO AMIDA BUTSU*

The first Sunday of every month, Ekoji conducts a SHOTSUKI SERVICE in memory of those people whose date of death (meinichi) falls in that month. The Kalavinka provides a list in remembrance of Ekoji's members and friends who passed away during the month of the issue. Your Ekoji Buddhist Temple exists because of their devotion and efforts as they become a part of our Nembutsu history.

This Service is not for those who have passed away because they are already taken care of by the fulfillment of the 18th Vow, but it provides us an opportunity to remember, express our gratitude and reflect on their continuing influence on our lives.

Traditionally special family memorial services are held on specific years following the death of a loved one. It allows us, as a family, to remember once again those who passed away and to hear the Dharma together. Arrangements for Special Family Memorial Services may be arranged by contacting Ekoji at ekoji.info@gmail.com.

Based on the year of the passing of a loved one, for 2025 the years for Special Family Memorial Services are: 2024 – 1st Year; 2023 – 3rd Year; 2017 – 7th Year; 2011 – 13th Year; 2007 – 17th Year; 1999 – 25th Year; 1991 – 33rd Year; 1974 – 50th Year; 1924 – 100th.

FOR THE MONTH OF MAY, WE WILL BE REMEMBERING WITH GRATITUDE:

APRIL 2025

Robert Thomas Miyashiro
4/7/2003
Geraldine Hamai Cantwell
8/13/1944 – 4/6/2007
Ralph Ishii
4/16/2007
Masaru Ushiro
4/26/2008
Rev. Shojo Honda
6/25/1929 – 4/13/2015
Junichi Kamikawa
11/11/1922 – 4/2/2003
"Tattoo" Tom Mitchell
3/7/1969 – 4/22/2024

MAY 2025

Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata
4/2/1897 – 5/5/1994
Claire Minami
1/12/1915 – 5/24/2009
Jon Craig
5/25/2019

June 2025

Kimi Kawamura
6/11/1992
Mary Nobuko Okamoto
8/14/1920 – 6/12/2017

YIKES!! IT'S COMING AGAIN ALREADY -- EKOJI'S OBON

REMEMBER THE DATES ; SATURDAY, JULY 12 – THE FESTIVAL

**SUNDAY, JULY 13 – OBON AND
HATSUBON SERVICE**

SO, WHAT IS EKOJI'S OBON?

ON SATURDAY, JULY 12, WE WILL HAVE A FESTIVAL

that has its cultural roots in Japan and its religious roots in ancient Buddhist legends from India. It came to the United States with the Japanese immigrants when they came here in the late 19th and 20th centuries and the tradition continues today. There are Japanese folk dancing, taiko drumming, all kinds of Japanese and other foods, games for the kids, and a really festive and fun time.



It is also Ekoji's biggest fundraiser and requires enormous Sangha participation to pull it off. **Brant and Maya Horio** are again filling their

roles, carried over from the past several years, as Co-Chairs. Team Captains are starting to meet and working on getting things ready,

Due to county requirements, attendance will be limited. All tickets will be sold online only – no-at-the-door sales. Also, again this year, we cannot have amplified sound so we will again depend on live music to do the traditional folk dances. We close this portion of the festivities with a traditional candlelight service in Ekoji's Garden of the Three Treasures.

ON SUNDAY, JULY 13, WE WILL EMPHASIZE THE RELIGIOUS SIDE OF OBON – A MEMORIAL SERVICE

when we remember and pay our deepest gratitude and respect to our loved ones who have passed away.



During the Obon Service, we hold a special segment for those whose loved ones have passed away since the last Obon service – this is called Hatsubon. Each of the Hatsubon families will be called to come up to the altar (Onaijin) and light a small, memorial candle in remembrance and gassho.

If you wish to participate in remembering your loved one during the Hatsubon portion of the service, please contact Erick Ishii or Andrea Chapman through the temple by July 4 so that arrangements can be made.

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU

GOTAN-E: CELEBRATING SHINRAN SHONIN'S BIRTHDAY

MATSUWAKAMARO BECOMES SHINRAN SHONIN – SHINRAN'S YOUTH

***"The sound of the Gion Shoja bells echoed the impermanence of all things,
The color of the sala flowers reveals the truth that the prosperous must decline,
The proud do not endure, they are like a dream on a spring night,
The mighty fall at last, they are as dust before the wind."
("The Tale of the Heiki," translation by Helen Craig McCullough, 1988")***

When the baby Hino Matsuwakamaro, who was eventually to be known as Shinran Shonin, was born in May 1163, it was a time of great chaos in Japan, as the Kamakura Period (1185-1333) in Japanese history was starting to be formed. This was to be a time of great change, of impermanence as the starting lines of the Heike Tale, reports.

There were the usual sufferings of life from fires, like the great fire of Angon in 1177 which destroyed 1/3 of Kyoto, diseases, poverty cause by a changing economy and starvation. But in the government and in society, it was also a time of great political upheaval as the Fujiwara Clan, which held political power by manipulating the Emperor of Japan, was being removed from its positions of power by the Taira warrior family.



As the Taira Clan took over, while still fighting with the Minamoto Clan, the winds of change and instability swept through the political, cultural, and religious structures of the existing society. The instability, violence, death and destruction from the competing warrior clans seeking power was always part of the background of Shinran's life. It started a little before he was born and continued to the start of the Tokugawa era in 1600.

Though Matsuwakamaro's family was a minor branch of the powerful Fujiwara Clan, they were on the losing side in this political/military struggle against the Taira. To provide for the safety of his sons from the Taira retribution, Matsuwakamaro's father and uncles agreed that Matsuwakamaro, then age nine, should be placed at the Tendai Temple Shoren-in to become a novice monk, while his two younger brothers were entrusted with a separate family. It is said that young Matsuwakamaro requested this opportunity to join a religious order where he sought, through the teachings of the Buddha, peace and serenity from the chaos and violence that was outside the monastic walls.

(Young Shinran, Cont. from Pg. 9)

Upon his acceptance as a novice monk, Matsuwakamaro was given the Buddhist name Hannen. The legend regarding Hannen's religious and spiritual growth on Mt. Hiei with the Tendai temples indicate that he was studious, diligent and remarkable at his work as a monk and showed great promise that he would one day be a temple leader. However, Hannen did not seek to achieve higher ranks, for his goal was seeking enlightenment. Personally frustrated with his own progress, he labored harder, only to realize he was no closer to enlightenment than when he first came to Mt. Hiei some 20 years ago.

Hannen decided to leave the Tendai monasteries on Mt. Hiei to seek Honen Shonin, who he had been introduced to through a friend. Honen Shonin himself had left the Tendai temples many years ago and now taught the Nembutsu way at his temple/home at Yoshimizu on the outskirts of Kyoto. After listening to Honen several times, Hannen sought to become a student of Honen. He was starting to realize that he was unable to find enlightenment "because I was relying solely upon myself. How could I, with all my human weaknesses, hope to gain enlightenment through my own power? I must rely on the great virtue of Amida buddha and call his holy name, Nami Amida Butsu, for my enlightenment." As a student of Honen Shonin, he was given the name "Shakku" by Honen.

Shakku was now on his Nembutsu path toward becoming known as Shinran Shonin, whose work and ideas transmitted the Nembutsu teachings around the world, including to Ekoji.

Namo Amida Butsu



EKOJI YOGA AND BUDDHISM RETREAT

By Donna R. Omata

On April 12, 2025, Ekoji Buddhist Temple hosted a Yoga Retreat presented by Certified Yoga Teacher, Bob Matsueda, from the Berkeley Buddhist Temple and the Center for Buddhist Education in Berkeley, California. Bob Matsueda is a highly experienced Yoga & Wellness Instructor and Yoga Therapist, certified by the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India Yoga Certification Board.



Mr. Bob Matsueda, Photo by Michio

During the first part of the retreat, Bob explained that generally, in the Western world, yoga is promoted as an exercise with intense poses. In contrast, Bob's practice, which he studied in India, focuses instead on Buddhistic meditation and deep yogic breathing, along with gentle movements, which promote health and clearing the mind, by following the teachings of the ancient Yoga Master, Patanjali, as recorded in his written Yoga Sutras. At any age, for young and old, Bob said that yoga can help reduce stress, increase blood flow, improve brain health, and reduce injury to help us remain active. We may not be able to control the world around us, but we can regulate and control how we respond by staying

centered and balanced through meditation and comfortable movement.

During a break, a delicious vegetarian lunch was prepared and served in the Tsuji Center by thoughtful and generous Sangha members. After lunch, the group was introduced to Yoga Nidra, which is a deep relaxation and mediation practice accompanied with music. Then via Zoom, a hybrid virtual presentation was provided by retired Rev. Bob Oshita and Rev. Patti Oshita from the Sacramento Buddhist Temple. Revs. Bob and Patti Oshita currently serve as Chaplains, presiding over the California State Assembly during the 2025 Legislative Sessions.

The Revs. Oshita spoke on the Roots of Yoga, delving into the ancient origins of Yoga by tracing its spiritual significance within Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and its broader Indian context. They explained that Shakyamuni Buddha utilized Yoga practices on his path to enlightenment. This presentation discussed the core principles and philosophies of Yoga, so the listener gained a deeper understanding of its purpose and meaning. After Rev. Oshita's presentation, Jimmy Major led an outdoor guided walking mediation in the Ekoji Temple Garden, informed by Jimmy's study of Zen meditation. Then Frank Swithers extended an invitation to Ekoji's weekly Thursday evening, In-Person Silent Meditation Sessions.

The informative day concluded with an In-Person and On-Line Sharing Circle Format to discuss attendees' thoughts about the yoga retreat.

As we said our goodbyes, one could hope that Bob would return, so that others might also experience a restorative Yoga Retreat.

We are deeply grateful to the following people and organizations for collaborating on an amazing restorative Yoga Retreat: Bob Matsueda, Instructor; Rev. Bob Oshita and Rev. Patti Oshita, Presenters; Andrea Chapman, Event Coordinator; Anna Tecson, Hondo Greeter; Tom Cray, Technology; Mah Doroud, Chef; Nori Nakamura, Assistant; Gail Kondo, Assistant; Kim Nguyen, Soup Chef; Jimmy Major, Meditation Leader; Frank Swithers, Mediation Leader; Erick Ishii, Minister's Assistant; and Bob Shimokaji, Minister's Assistant.

We are also deeply grateful to Bishop Marvin Harada, the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE), Buddhist Churches of America & Dharma Forward: Endowment Foundation Grant for their generous support in making this program possible.

[Learn more with the following links:](#)

Bob Matsueda's website: <https://www.bobmatsueda.com>

A book written by Rev. Bob Oshita and Rev. Patti Oshita, "The Dharma is Everywhere", <https://abscenter.square.site/product/dharma-is-everywhere/30?cs=true&qv=true&vfd=true>



Photo: Ekoji's April 12, 2025 Yoga Retreat. Yoga Instructor, Bob Matsueda is standing second from the right with Ekoji members and guests



SECRETARY'S REPORT: EKOJI BOARD REVIEWS BUSY SPRING AND PLANS FOR SUMMER

On April 21, the Ekoji Buddhist Temple Board of Directors met to share news, plan activities, and tackle building concerns. The meeting opened with gassho led by Rev. Kurt Rye. Members then approved the March minutes and treasurer's reports without changes.

Rev. Rye's Update

Rev. Rye said he will return for Ekoji's Obon on July 12 and is looking forward to participating.

President's Report

President Andrea Chapman announced that fundraising for the Pride Parade was finished in one day. Extra money will pay for a banner and snacks. About twenty people have signed up so far, and there is room for many more.

Additional Discussions

The board discussed new kitchen safety rules. Plans include indoor and outdoor cameras, a sign-in log, and a lock for the propane tank. The foyer HVAC unit is still not 100% operational. A member will be donating new smart thermostats. Spring fund-raisers are doing well. The temple sold over 60 t-shirts, our yoga workshop drew 38 people, and a Reiki class set for May 10 has 9 participants registered.

Obon Festival Plans

Ticket prices for Obon will be \$6 with ticket sales being online only. The team is arranging police support, parking, and live music but still needs a food coordinator. They hope to confirm an ambulance crew soon.

Library Progress

Jimmy Major finished installing shelves for the new library. He labeled reference books for "in-house use" only, is adding spine labels, and aims to open the library in late May or early June.

Youth and Community Outreach

The nearby Korean temple suggested a joint youth potluck after July events and donated colorful paper lanterns.

Building and Grounds

Volunteers are deep-cleaning bathrooms with peroxide and baking soda. Replacing six cracked concrete slabs near the entrance could cost around \$7,000. The board is weighing that work against higher-priority jobs like fixing a leaking sanctuary window and the foyer HVAC system.

Looking Ahead

In the next month, the temple will hold a chanting class on April 27, a cleanup and raffle on May 4, the Reiki workshop on May 10, and Gotan-e services on May 18 followed by a ten-year memorial service for Rev. Honda. Website redesign talks will restart after Obon in August.



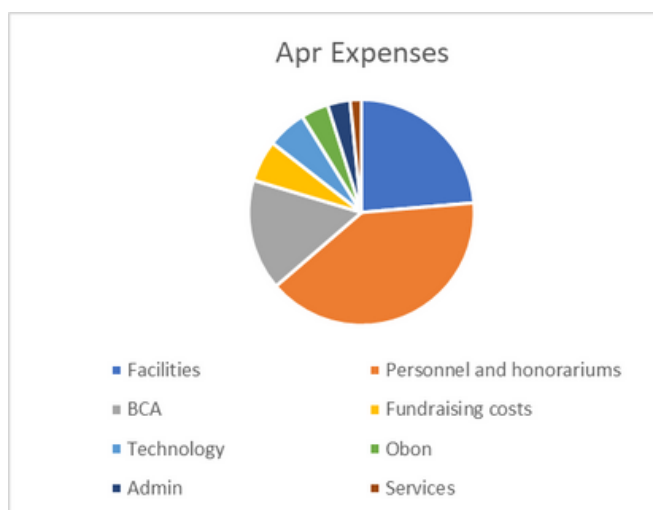
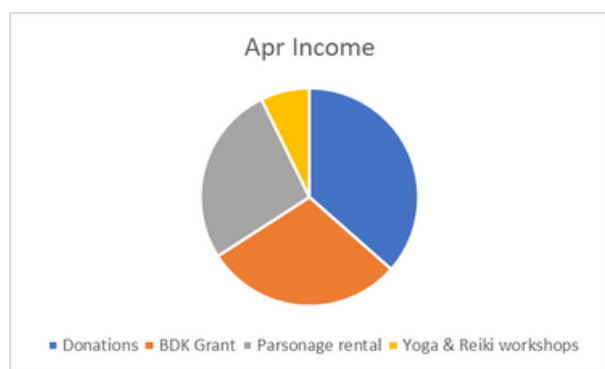
MONTHLY TREASURER'S REPORT

By Maya Horio, Treasurer

The Board presents this column to make transparent how we use sangha donations and our other income streams, and to illuminate the daily financial flows that happen behind the scenes, complementing the financial recap and outlook that we share at our annual sangha meeting each fall. We welcome your thoughts and questions, as directed to our temple Treasurer, Maya Horio, at ekojitreasurer@gmail.com.

April 2025 Finance Flows: Our income again outweighed our expenses this month—a trend that we hope continues! We had more varied expense flows after hosting a wonderful yoga seminar, stocking up on t-shirts to sell at Ekoji's bookstore, and starting to see costs for the upcoming Obon festival.

- **Income (\$12,337):** Sangha membership dues again made up our largest chunk of income this month, closely followed by our monthly grant from BDK America and parsonage rental income. Registrations for our yoga and reiki workshops made up the remaining income for this month.
- **Expenses (\$8,114):** Personnel and honorarium payments made up the biggest single chunk of our expenses, as springtime weather lowered a bit of our electricity bill and other facility costs. BCA monthly dues, technology annual renewal fees, admin costs (including online processing payments and facility supplies), and flowers for our weekly services comprised much of our other expenses this month. We also submitted our Obon event permit application, with the accompanying permit fees—fingers crossed the permit process goes smoothly this year!





JOIN EKOJI'S MOVIE DISCUSSION



*The Dharma speaks to us through the sounds of the world –
Forcefully, eloquently and beautifully.
It speaks of the unending change around us,
The immutable truth of interdependence,
And the peace in nature
Do we have the ears to hear and listen...?
(Rev. Kenryu T. Tsuji, The Heart of the Buddha Dharma, p. 67)*

Enjoy Ekoji's virtual movie discussions. They are held on the third Sunday of each month and are led by Ann and Joran Stegner. The discussion is casual, may wander away from the movie a lot, but it is always a chance hear the Dharma through the movie and the discussion, regardless of whether it was on topic.

The movie for May is **“Shall We Dance” (2004 version). The Zoom discussion will be at 2:00pm on Sunday, May 18th.**

It can be watched for free with ads on Paramount:

https://www.paramountplus.com/movies/video/vM5U2Z1zepj71_jETIkowhcALuezDfK/

It can also be rented cheaply through Amazon Prime.

Join the Zoom Movie Discussion

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84021310685>

Meeting ID: 840 2131 0685



Registration for this workshop is now closed.

Reiki Level 1 Workshop: Saturday, May 10

From 1:30 – 5:30 pm

Ekoji Buddhist Temple Sangha Hall in Tsuji Center

Instructor: Ekoji Sangha Member Riki Malone

The Workshop will provide an introduction to the history and philosophy of Reiki.

According to a July 16, 2024 Cleveland Clinic article, “Reiki has roots in ancient Japanese healing practices and is considered a form of energy healing. It stems from the Japanese words “rei,” meaning universal, and “ki,” meaning vital life force energy.

“The theory is that a Reiki master (a practitioner trained in Reiki) can channel the “universal life force energy” to you. They say they do this by either lightly placing their hands on you or by hovering them just above you, using a series of hand positions. Some people will call these techniques: Reiki masters say they don't create energy or give their energy to you. Rather, they say they act as a “conduit” for the universal life force energy that exists around us.”



In Gassho

Dana from March 29, 2025 through April 30, 2025

Joy Aso
John Barnes
Carolina Bello
Jane Blechman
Jessica Brooks
James Buck
Eugenia Burkes
Evan Cantwell
Alexander Corbin
Joseph Crilley
Medium Dequan Jones
Mahkameh Doroud
Matthew Boubrava
Stanley Fujii
Connie Hoffman
Marisa and Tamon Honda
Emily Ihara

Cheryl Kameda
Amiko Kashiwagi
Yuko Keicho
Norm and Gail Kondo
Sandra Lukic-Dapoingy
Thea Maggard
Richard Malone and Rick Ware
Amatullah Maxey
Arlene and Wayne Minami
Fujiko Motobu
Bert and Nance Motonaga
Brian Nagata
(in memory of Jane Nagata)
Brian Nagata
(in memory of Sakaye Tsuji)
Kemi Nakabayashi
(in memory of Sakaye Tsuji)

Ken and Nori Nakamura
Ken and Nori Nakamura
(in memory of Ellen Nakamura)
Lisa and Greg Nakamura
Donna R. Omata
(in memory of Robert Rokuro Omata)
Lauren Rabil
Jerry Rankin
Ayako Rosi
Edward Sams
Roger Stoutt
Hanmaun Seon Center of Wash., D.C.
Michael Snyder
Edgar Sullivan
Frank Swithers
Anna Tecson
Charles Uyeda
Mikio Yamashita



SANGHA SCOOPS

By Ken Nakamura



The beautiful Flowers sent by Ekoji to the San Mateo Buddhist Temple for Mrs. Tsuji's meaningful Memorial Service on April 5, 2025.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ANH THU VO upon being designated as a 2025 Luce Scholar by the Henry Luce Foundation.

The Luce Foundation provides a year-long scholarship and placement support in foreign NGO, foreign governments, universities, think tanks, etc., to assist their Scholars in pursuing their interests.

Established in 1974, the Foundation states, “the Luce Scholars Program is a competitive leadership development fellowship that provides emerging leaders with immersive professional experiences in Asia. We aim to strengthen relationships across borders by offering Scholars opportunities to deepen their understanding of Asia's countries, cultures, and people. Through this yearlong immersion, the Program equips scholars with knowledge and skills to address global leadership challenges and build a more interconnected world.”

Anh Thu will be leaving for Southeast Asia in June. She holds a Master's degree in Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law from the Geneva Academy of Human Law and Human Rights, and a Bachelor's degree in Global Security and Justice and African American Studies from the University of Virginia. Anh Thu currently lives in New York City and works for Pen America, a NGO concerned with human rights and free expression.

Anh Thu is the younger daughter of Hung Vo and Ekoji Trustee Kim Nguyen, and the younger sister of Minister's Assistant Truc Vo. The family has been part of Ekoji Sangha for years, and both girls completed their Dharma School at Ekoji.

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES, MAY 2025

WEEKLY

SUNDAY

- CHILDREN'S DHARMA SCHOOL, 9:30AM – 10:30AM, SUNDAY, MAY 4, MAY 11, AND MAY 18 IN THE TSUJI CENTER.
- HYBRID SERVICE, 11:00AM WITH AN AFTER-SERVICE HYBRID DHARMA DISCUSSION IN THE HONDO.

WEDNESDAY

- DHARMA BREEZE ONLINE SERVICE, 7:00PM IN THE EKOJI ZOOM ROOM.

THURSDAY

- IN-PERSON MEDITATION GROUP, 7:30PM IN THE HONDO.

MONTHLY

FIRST SUNDAY

- TEMPLE CLEANUP, 9:30AM – 10:30AM, ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE
- SHOTSUKI – DURING THE CHANTING OF A SUTRA, SANGHA MEMBERS WHO LOST A LOVED ONE DURING THAT PARTICULAR MONTH IN ANY PRIOR YEAR ARE INVITED TO GO BEFORE THE NAIJIN TO OFFER GASSHO AND BURN INCENSE IN LOVING MEMORY AND GRATITUDE FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS PASSED.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND HOLIDAYS (DETAILS AT WWW.EKOJI.ORG)

- DEMYSTIFYING REIKI WORKSHOP, SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1:30PM - 5:30PM IN THE HONDO. DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS MAY 4.
- YOUNG BUDDHISTS ASSOCIATION MEETING, SUNDAY, MAY 11 IN THE SANGHA HALL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE HYBRID SUNDAY SERVICE.
- GOTAN-E SERVICE, SUNDAY, MAY 18 AT 11:00AM IN THE HONDO, FOLLOWED BY THE 10-YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR REV. SHOJO HONDA AT 12:00 NOON.
- BUDDHIST MOVIE GROUP DISCUSSION, "SHALL WE DANCE," SUNDAY, MAY 18 AT 2:00PM IN THE EKOJI ZOOM ROOM.

MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS

- WEDNESDAY, 1:00PM TO 2:00PM
- SCHEDULE A ZOOM OR PHONE MEETING WITH REV. KURT RYE BY CALLING 703-239-0500 OR EMAILING RYE.EKOJI@GMAIL.COM

A Kalavinka is a mythical bird with the head of a human and a long flowing colorful tail. It lives in the Pure Land. It has a beautiful voice that sings praises of the Buddha, the sutras, and the words of the Buddha.



KALAVINKA

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REVEREND KURT RYE

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Ed Sams

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Rob Fike, Certified Minister's Assistant
Truc Vo, Certified Jr. Minister's Assistant
Ken Nakamura: Certified Minister's Assistant (Ret.)
Pilar Uelman, Lay Dharma Leader
Molly Kuramoto: Lay Dharma Leader
Ed Sams: Lay Dharma Leader and Service Chair Coordinator

EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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