

DECEMBER 2024

KALAVINKA

A NEWSLETTER OF EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

HAPPY BODHI DAY!



This picture is from the BDK Collection on The Life of the Buddha.

While seeking enlightenment meditating under the Bodhi tree, Siddhartha's demeanor appears calm and peaceful. But internally, he is engaged in a great personal struggle with Mara, the "Bringer of Death," who seeks to dissuade Siddhartha from his search. This historic struggle with Mara comes to an end on December 8th. As the first faint light of the day began to glow in the eastern sky, Siddhartha becomes a Buddha – a fully Awakened Person, and demonstrates that it is possible for a man to become a Buddha. Through his teachings, Siddhartha shares what he learned, and this continues to this day.

Namo Amida Butsu



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84,000 THOUGHTS

MY BODHISATTVA

By Rev. Kurt Ry

Buddhism is a vast and rich tapestry of Buddhas, mysterious monks and various celestial beings. One of these beings that is widely known across many schools of Buddhism is the Bodhisattva.

Bodhisattvas, by definition, are enlightened beings who are motivated by great compassion to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. They are often depicted in art as celestial beings that fly through the air wearing flowing gowns. They can be seen helping the hopeless people who are mistreated in daily life. It is understandable why they are often compared with angels. This is the traditional understanding of the Bodhisattva based on how they have been represented in various Buddhist Sutras and pieces of art.

In addition to helping people, another popular interpretation is that a Bodhisattva can be any being that helps us deepen our understanding of the Buddhist teachings. While a human Bodhisattva is more the norm, I was once told by a Buddhist monk that even animals can be Bodhisattvas if they help us to understand the teachings.

I found out last summer that one of my Dharma friends, Tony, had passed away in Fresno. I consider my friend Tony a Bodhisattva. The Fresno Temple is in the old downtown section of Fresno, California; and is literally surrounded by homeless camps, food kitchens and people living on the streets. One day at our daily morning service, Tony appeared. He explained he was homeless but had considered himself a Buddhist since he was 17. At this time Tony was about fifty years old, but living on the streets had aged him beyond his years.

Tony came to the morning service every day and became very good at chanting the Shoshinge. During the day he would spend time in the library reading Jodo Shinshu literature. At least once a week he and I would have an in-depth discussion about the Dharma. Over time his mental and physical health improved. I think this may have come about because of his new found regular schedule and a new sense of purpose to his life. After a year Tony got public housing. He also began attending the morning service less frequently.

Unfortunately, it also became apparent that his substance abuse had increased, and his hygiene and ability to concentrate diminished. His personality also changed. He became more critical and would ask me pointed questions, sometimes in an attempt to outwit me. I tried to keep him

(*Buddhist Bodhisattva*, Cont on Pg 2)

(Buddhist Bodhisattva Cont. from Pg 1)

engaged by taking him to other temples in the area, but at one point he simply stopped coming. After that, he would call once in a while, but he seemed to have no sense of time or any connection outside himself.

By the time I transferred in January, I had not seen or heard from Tony in several months. I would think of him when I read one of Shinran's writings that we had discussed, or when I would see a homeless person on the street. When I heard of his passing, I finally realized the impact of our friendship.

Fresno was my first assignment, and I had a steep learning curve on all the different aspects of the ministry. The Fresno Sangha was very gracious to me. They were patient when I made mistakes or was anxious. Tony was different. He would point out my mistakes or be critical of my views or explanations. Being human, this would make me angry and I would want to spend less time with him.

In retrospect, when I was frustrated with events at the temple, he would help me refocus on the larger idea of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. He would be there to remind me of the gift I had in the ministry, the opportunity to share the Dharma.

At the time, I thought I was helping him by giving Tony structure in his life and "teaching" him the Dharma. In retrospect he was helping me by treating me as a co-traveler on the Shin path, and showing me humility. Tony was a true Bodhisattva for he helped me see things in myself. He also helped me know how to approach this self-examination with the Dharma as the reference point. Thank you Tony.

Namo Amida Butsu

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/TZMLCOGSQT0TGDIRTNT5EYDBZXK9F2OVZJO](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tzmlcogsqt0tgdirtnt5eydbzxk9f2ovzjo)



A LOOK BACK and A LOOK FORWARD

By: Andrea Chapman

As another year concludes, I pause to reflect on our fulfilling journey, both personally and professionally. Numerous moments filled my heart with gratitude, making me grateful (and proud) to be part of the Ekoji Sangha. Even the challenges we faced presented opportunities for growth.

Your newly elected Board of Directors kicked off the year with a rapid fire seven-hour strategic planning session in which we outlined our strategies and goals for 2024. We will repeat a similar process next month and now have the benefit of reviewing the previous year's plan and making adjustments, as needed.

Also in January, with the help of Joe Gotchy and myself, we revived the temple podcast Echo Ekoji. Guests for 2024 included: Michael Huff, Truc Vo, Wyatt Spage, Matt Doubrava, Ann Stegner, Laverne Imori, Emily Ihara, Nick Karen, Brant and Maya Horio, and Ken and Nori Nakamura. Our last interview of the year will be with Rev. Kurt Rye, our supervising minister. The purpose of this initiative is to bring the lay voice to light. We can learn so much from our fellow travelers if we engage in the art of deep listening. You can find these recordings as well as Season One on the Ekoji YouTube Channel.

My favorite experience of the year was leading the weekly Dharma Discussion group, which meets most Sundays after service. Everyone gets an opportunity to share their thoughts on the day's message and no two takeaways are ever the same. It's a foolproof way to 10x the wisdom and compassion, which is the heart of the Dharma. If you haven't yet participated I cordially invite you to do so in the year ahead.

Obon 2024 was epic in that we were continuously bombarded with challenges and still exceeded our goals despite having attendance capped at 500 people, no amplified music allowed and a small but mighty volunteer pool. Each day presented a new opportunity to practice equanimity, and we are grateful for the stellar leadership and examples set by Brant and Maya Horio.

Additional events included a Seminar entitled The Benefits and Value of Shin Buddhist Teachings led by BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada; A Kieshiki Affirmation Service conducted by Bishop Harada; Virtual Workshop: Inclining Towards Peace: Mindfulness and Compassion Meditation led by Michael Galvin; TET Luncheon hosted by the Girl Scouts; Serenity in Brass Conce Temple Picnic; Mother's Day Raffle; Father's Day Raffle; Commercial Kitchen Completion; Pride Month Potluck Luncheon; Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast; Participation in Burke Lake Community Festival; and hosting the first hybrid Eastern Buddhist League Conference. These were accomplished while maintaining our regular programming which includes a Sunday service, Wednesday Zoom service, Thursday meditation group, and monthly Buddhist Movie Discussion.

((Pres. Message - Cont. from Pg. 3)

That is a robust calendar of events if you take into consideration we are 100% volunteer operated!

And, we have already booked some exciting events for the New Year including:

- An Ekoji Dharma Gathering with the Three Yanas - Theravada, Vajrayana, and Mahayana on Saturday, Jan. 11, followed by a message from the Bishop on Sunday, Jan. 12.
- Dr. George Tanabe, who delivered the memorable message entitled Write Your Own Sutra will speak again at Ekoji on Sunday, Jan. 26.
- In February, former BCA Bishop Kodo Umezu and Rev. Brian Nagata will visit us to host a seminar entitled “Run, Don’t Walk to Shin Buddhism” on Saturday, Feb. 8,
- Rev. Umezu will deliver the message on Sunday, Feb. 9.
- Also new, Ekoji will host an all-day interactive Buddhist Yoga Workshop on Saturday, April 12 led by Bob Matsueda, with a special message, from Rev. Bob Oshita;
- A Vegetarian cooking demonstration with a professional chef and a Dharma exchange.

Additional details about these exciting events will be forthcoming so keep an eye out for our weekly email delivered on Saturday’s around 1 pm ET.

In closing, I wish you and yours a safe and joyous holiday season filled with gratitude and the company of your fellow travelers. May peace prevail and all beings dwell in loving kindness.

Namo Amida Butsu

2025 EKOJI OFFICERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrea Chapman	Maya Horio
Micheal Paul Huff	Jim Daniels
Mahkameh Doroud	Roger Scott
Jesse Barrick	Nick Karen

EKOJI TRUSTEES

Kim Nguyen	Ed Sams
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BDK ADVISOR: Mikio Yamashita

Rev. Kurt Rye will swear in the incoming Board of Directors 30 to 60 days after the annual meeting. At our January 2025 Board Retreat, we will collectively select the members of the Executive Committee (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) and the members at large.



EKOJI – THE TEMPLE OF THE GIFT OF LIGHT -- SHARING THE DHARMA

SERVICES

- Regular Sunday Services – Sunday 11:00 am
- Dharma Breeze – Wednesday, 7:00 pm
- Shotsuki Service – First Sunday of each month
- Meditation Session, Weekly, Thurs. evening 7:30 pm
- Children’s Dharma School – 9:30-10:30 am (20 Students for 2004-05 year)
- Special Life Markers Services
 - *Hatsumairi – first service usually for children*
 - *Weddings*
 - *Kieishiki – Affirmation Services*
 - *Funerals*
 - *Memorial Services*
- Other Services

SANGHA FELLOWSHIP

- Young Buddhist Association (YBA) – Started in 2024 for Buddhists in their early 20s and 30s.
- Nen Daiko – Ekoji affiliated renowned Taiko Group since 1994
- Dounen Daiko – Nen Daiko’s Youth Taiko Group since 2017
- Monthly Ekoji Podcast, “Echo Ekoji,” and learn about our fascinating Sangha Members
- Participation to meet fellow Sangha members from other East Coast Temples, Churches and Buddhist Organizations through the EBL

DEDICATED RELIGIOUS ADVICE AND COUNSELING WITH REV. KURT RYE

1. **Rev Rye has dedicated Wednesdays Office Hours from 1-2:00 pm**
2. **or Schedule a Zoom or Phone Meeting**

LET’S TALK

- Regular Hybrid Discussions after each Sunday Service
- Regular Discussions as part of Dharma Breeze Sessions – Wed, 7:00 pm
- Virtual Movie Discussions with Buddhist Lessons, 3rd Sundays of each month -2:00 pm – Led by Ann and Joran Stegner
- Periodic Seminars such as the virtual seminar with Rev. Don Castro on an “ Eco-Dharma “
- A Safe Space for a casual conversation with fellow travelers on the Buddhist Path

STAYING IN TOUCH

- Weekly End of Service Announcements
- Weekly E-Messages about coming activities at Ekoji
- Monthly Kalavinka newsletter including: Rev. Rye’s Thoughts, full Treasurers Report and Secretary’s Board Minutes Report
- In Development – a New Web Site
- Meetings with the Sangha like the Annual Meeting

WORKING TOGETHER – TAKING CARE OF OUR RELIGIOUS HOME

- Help in Cleaning Up the Temple
- Join the Garden Maintenance and Other Programs when the call for help goes out.
- Help the Temple Financially
- Check with the Temple Pres. where volunteers are needed on both long (Committees) and short term basis. REMEMBER, EKOJI IS A 100% VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

SHARE YOUR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS WITH YOUR TEMPLE BOARD



Ekoji's November 24th Sunday Service was in memory of and gratitude for the work of Eshinni and Kakushinni, Shinran Shonin's wife and daughter, respectively. Minister's Assistant Tran Truc Vo provided the Dharma message for the service. Below is Truc's Dharma message.

ESHINNI AND KAKUSHINNI -- TWO DEDICATED WOMEN WHO HELPED BRING JODO SHIN BUDDHISM TO US TODAY

Good morning, Ekoji. Thank you for joining us for our Eshinni/Kakushinni service.

Please join me in gassho.

Namu Amida Butsu.

Namu Amida Butsu.

Namu Amida Butsu.

Many of us are familiar with the name Shinran Shonin, the founder of our sect of Buddhism, Jodo Shinshu. However, much of what we know about Shinran and his life is due to correspondence between Eshinni, Shinran's wife, and Kakushinni, Shinran and Eshinni's youngest daughter.

Jodo Shinshu would not be where it is today without the efforts of these two women; and yet, many Jodo Shinshu Buddhists are unfamiliar with these two women. They may know that Eshinni is the name of Shinran's wife and Kakushinni is the name of Shinran's youngest daughter, but they are often unaware of the contributions these two women made towards Jodo Shinshu and preserving Shinran's legacy. Today, I would like to share some background about these two women and express gratitude for the actions they took to allow us to all follow this Nembutsu path today.

Most of our present-day knowledge about Eshinni is actually from the letters that she wrote to Kakushinni. These letters were found in 1921, and also helped shed light on Shinran's life as he had left minimal details regarding his life.



Eshinni -- 1182-1268

Eshinni was the daughter of Miyoshi Tamenori, a high-rank samurai in Echigo province on the Japan Sea side of the main island of Honshu. Based on her letters, she was born around 1182. She was said to be refined and well-educated. She was a capable landowner and oversaw multiple household servants and their families as well. Because of her own personal wealth, some believe that she was able to provide extra income for their family, along with what Shinran was able to make as a commoner, while he also studied and explained about the Nembutsu path.

(Eshinni and Kakushinni - Cont. on pg. 7)

(Eshinni and Kakushinni,_Cont from pg. 6)

The two met while Shinran was in exile in Echigo, and likely married in 1210 or earlier, according to one of her letters from 1263, which would have her around 28 or 29 when she married Shinran. Getting married was unusual for a Buddhist priest for, at that time, priests were to have been celibate. Of course, when Shinran was exiled, he was also defrocked leading Shinran to think of himself as neither priest nor commoner. Marrying a “former” priest and then marrying at age 28 or 29, which does not seem that old nowadays, but during that time, getting married at that age was fairly late. Eshinni and Shinran went on to have 6 children: three boys and three girls. Shinran and Eshinni raised most of their kids in Echigo and the surrounding areas near Echigo.

While living in Echigo, Eshinni likely received guidance from Shinran as her letters reveal that she was quite devout in her belief in the Nembutsu, and she seemed to have a firm grasp of the essence of the teachings.

Although Shinran was pardoned in 1211, and they could have gone back to the “civilized” world of Kyoto, Eshinni and Shinran moved to the Kanto region, which today includes the modern-day Tokyo area, to continue spreading the teachings.

While they were in Kanto, Shinran worked on his main work, the Kyogyoshinsho, in which he entrusts himself to the vows of Amida Buddha. During this time, however, Eshinni recalls that there was a brief lapse where Shinran forgot the Nembutsu and reverted to reading the sutras. She noted that everyone is fallible, and that faith is not unwavering.



Kakushinni, 1224-1283

Ultimately, Eshinni and Shinran relocated to Kyoto around 1233 with some of their children, and Eshinni helped oversee their household in Kyoto. **Kakushinni**, their youngest daughter, had been born in Mito in 1224. She was the only one of Shinran and Eshinni’s children to likely never have set foot in Echigo. Kakushinni would have been 10 or 11 years old when she moved with her parents to Kyoto.

Kakushinni married her first husband, Hino Hirotsuna (one of her father’s disciples) in 1238 or 1239 when she was 15 or 16 years old.

She then gave birth to her first son, Koju, who was also known as Kakue, his Buddhist name. Her husband passed when Kakue was seven, and she took Kakue back to live with her parents.

Eshinni stayed with Shinran until around 1254, when she had to return to Echigo to oversee her property. She was 73 years old at this time and Shinran was 84. She left Shinran in the care of Kakushinni.

(Eshinni and Kakushinni, Cont. on Pg. 8)

Upon Eshinni's return to Echigo, she faced great hardship as there was famine and epidemics ravaged the already scarce population. Not only was Eshinni responsible for her land, she also was responsible for her orphaned grandchildren as well as her servants and their families. She details the hardships in her letters to Kakushinni, stating that she had sold her clothing in order to feed her household. Despite these hardships and her own wavering health in her advanced age, Eshinni remained steadfast in her belief of the Nembutsu.

Kakushinni and Eshinni continued to keep up correspondence after Eshinni returned to Echigo until Eshinni's passing in 1268. In one of Kakushinni's letter, she regales how Shinran's death in 1263 had been rather uneventful. At that time, people believed that strange and miraculous events would occur when an important religious person died. In her response to her daughter, Eshinni replied, "There is no doubt that your father was born in the Pure Land, and there is no need for me to reiterate this." This quote, some have written, was an indication of how deeply she, as did Shinran, had faith in the Nembutsu, and she wished that her children and grandchildren also accepted it.

Kakushinni had her father, Shinran, cremated a day after his passing, and his remains were deposited at a place called Otani the next day. She had a tombstone, that was five-levels and about 7 feet high, erected over Shinran's grave three years after his passing.

After Shinran's passing, followers from all over Japan came to his gravesite to pay their respects and share what he had taught them before, during and after his exile to Echigo. To accommodate Shinran's visiting followers, Kakushinni, on land given to her by her second husband, also a follower of the Nembutsu path, and with funds donated from many of Shinran's followers, built the Ancestor Hall and a six-sided structure in which an image of Shinran was enshrined, and to which his remains were moved. This became the original headquarters of our denomination, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

Kakushinni was named as the first *Rusushiki* (Caretaker), and she determined that the property and buildings would not belong to her family, but rather owned jointly by Shinran's followers, and to be maintained by them jointly. The *Rusushiki* position was subsequently held by Kakushinni's sons, and the title was changed to *Monshu* or Administrator. The position also became a matter of direct lineage, from Shinran Shonin to his daughter, Kakushinni, and through her to Kakue, her son, then to Kakunyo, her grandson and to our current Gomonshu, Kojun Ohtani.

Please join me in gassho as I express our deep gratitude to these two women. We would not know Jodo Shinshu, as we do today, without the efforts of these two women. Eshinni's dedication and support to Shinran allowed him to explore the Nembutsu and spread these teachings. Kakushinni's efforts established the foundation and center from which Shinran's teachings could continue to spread for generations.

Namo Amida Butsu.



SECRETARY'S REPORT OF THE EKOJI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

By Michael Paul Huff, Secretary

The Board of Directors meeting for the Ekoji Buddhist Temple on November 16, 2024, began with gassho led by Reverend Kurt Rye. The consent agenda, including the approval of October's meeting minutes and treasurer's reports, was reviewed and approved. A correction to an inaccurately labeled free yoga workshop was noted and updated.

Reverend Rye provided updates during his minister's report. He expressed gratitude for the temple's successful hosting of a recent event and announced plans to attend continuing education at the Jodo Shinshu Center. These programs aim to improve ministerial training and ensure consistent training for minister's assistants, who play a vital role in temple operations.

The president's report highlighted two upcoming events. In January, Bishop Harada will lead an event exploring three Buddhist traditions, featuring contributions from scholars and other experts. In February, a workshop led by former Bishop Umezu and Reverend Brian Nagata will focus on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Both events aim to deepen understanding and encourage participation.

The board reviewed Sangha survey results, focusing on fostering growth and maintaining the temple's sense of community. Suggestions included creating structured opportunities for newcomers, reintroducing group-based education, and exploring lay-led classes modeled on Sunday school formats.

Plans for an April 12 Buddhist yoga workshop were discussed. The hybrid event will feature yoga, a vegetarian cooking demonstration, and a group discussion. It aims to attract new members and will serve as a fundraiser. An in-person fee of \$35 was set.

The board considered collaborating with Eastern District resources to support introductory Buddhism classes. This partnership could ease local volunteer demands while maintaining quality and inclusivity.

Volunteerism and participation were major topics. The survey revealed diverse preferences, with some favoring in-person activities and others engaging online. Discussion focused on community-oriented events and weekly activities to increase engagement. Cleaning duties were also discussed, with proposals to incorporate post-service cleanups.

(November Board Mtg Rept, Cont on Pg 10)

(Sec. Nov. Board Minutes - Cont from Pg. 9)

Reverend Rye shared examples from other temples, emphasizing the importance of empowering volunteers to choose their activities. He noted the temple's flexibility compared to more traditional structures as an opportunity for innovation and growth.

The board reviewed the parsonage vacancy, deciding to reduce the rent from \$3,700 to \$3,600 during the slower holiday season to attract tenants. Updates on the temple's website were also discussed. A demo site (<https://demo.ekoji.org>) is available for feedback, and plans for public-facing and member-focused sections are underway. Content editors will oversee updates, supported by a technical backend team.

Rental policies for the updated kitchen were reviewed. Proposed fees of \$50 per hour for members and \$100 per hour for non-members aim to cover maintenance costs. A facility guide will be updated to reflect these changes. Plans to purchase bookshelves for the temple library were finalized, with a budget under \$500 and a January order date set to ensure availability for a donor's February visit.

A January retreat for in-person discussions and team-building is planned. Reverend Rye expressed interest in attending the retreat if notified in advance. Finally, the board reviewed preparations for the annual meeting, including sharing bylaws and logistical details.

The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn, which passed unanimously, followed by a closing gassho.

Namo Amida Butsu

MARK YOUR CALENDARS -- UP-COMING EKOJI DISCUSSIONS

- **Saturday, January 11, 2025 -- The Three YANAs - Theravada (Hinayana), Mahayana, and Vajrayana with Rev. Bishop Marvin Harada and Dr. Balaji Hebbar, George Washington Univ Religious Dept.**
- **Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025 Bishop Harada to present the Dharma Talk at the 11:00 Service.**
- **Jan 25, 2025 - Dr George Tanabe former Head of the Religion Dept. at the University of Hawaii**
- **Feb, 8, 2025, Seminar, ""Run Don't Walk to Shin Buddhism"" by Former Bishop Kodo Umezu and Rev. Brian Nagata**
- **Feb. 9, 2025 -- Former Bishop Kodo Umezu will provide the Dharma Talk at the 11:00 am Service**



November Treasurer's Report

By Maya Horio, Treasurer

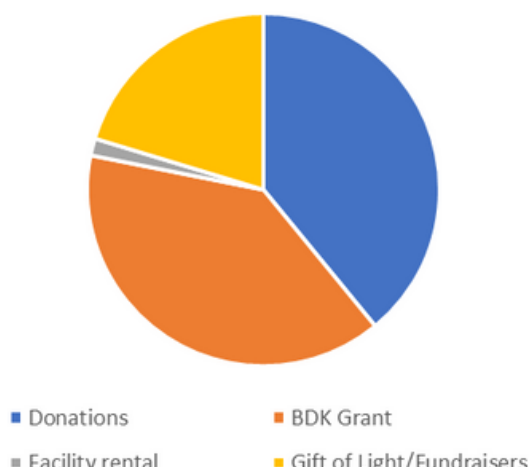
Monthly Treasurer's Report

This monthly column is a result of Board discussions at our strategic planning retreat last December, where we identified transparency, sangha "ownership," and responsible management as key goals for 2024. We share the results of our financial management and the proposed budget for the following year at our annual sangha meeting each fall, but much of our daily financial flows happens behind the scenes. The Board hopes that including a monthly recap of our finances in the *Kalavinka* will provide sangha members and friends with more insight on how we use your donations and the challenges in realizing our goal of financial self-sufficiency. We welcome your thoughts and questions, as directed to our temple Treasurer, Maya Horio, at ekojitreasurer@gmail.com.

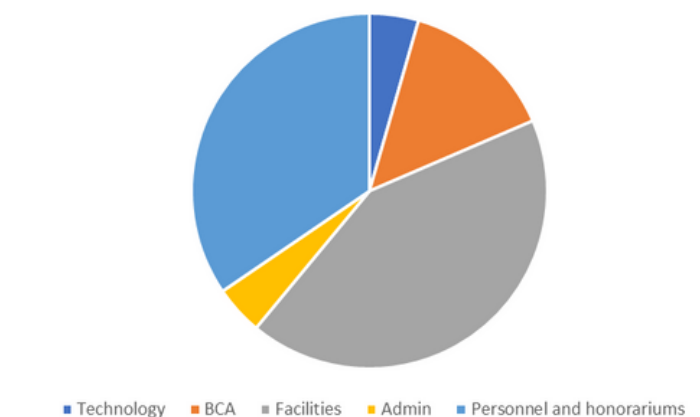
Nov 2024 Finance Flows: Sangha donations declined this month while annual technology and fire permit fees came due, causing our expenses to outweigh our income for November. This trend raises the certainty that we will need to draw income from our investment funds to end the year with a balanced ledger. We are, however, awaiting a response from the BCA Dharma Forward Campaign's Technology Fund on our grant application to recoup some of the expenses for our audiovisual system upgrades last year. If our grant application is approved, the funds will help to replenish our discretionary reserves, potentially also negating the need to draw down on our investment portfolio.

- **Income (\$6,401):** Sangha donations, our BDK grant, and donations to our Gift of Light capital campaign fund made up almost all of our income this month. Our parsonage is back on the rental market but remains vacant.
- **Expenses (\$8,688):** The Board subscribed to a new password management system to improve our digital security measures, and paid our annual fire permit inspection fees, which were two primary drivers of our expense increases this month.

Nov Income



Nov Expenses





UNOFFICIAL REPORT ON THE 2024 ANNUAL EKOJI SANGHA MEETING

By Michael P. Huff, Ekoji Secretary

Attended by 21 in-person and 10 online attendees, the Annual Sangha Meeting of Ekoji Buddhist Temple, was held on November 17th, and chaired by our board's president, Andrea Chapman.

Review of Programs in 2024. It began with a review of the temple's programs in 2024, which began with January's seminar on Shin Buddhist teachings led by Bishop Harada, paired with a Kieshiki service for 11 participants. February's events included a virtual meditation workshop hosted by former temple leader Michael Galvin, which also served as a fundraiser. In March, we had a luncheon for the Vietnamese Tet Lunar New Year, featuring the Girl Scouts of Troop who explained about the celebration of Tet and performed Vietnamese dances associated with Tet. In March we also had a concert showcasing Japanese composers, which reflected the temple's partnerships with external organizations.

May brought a temple picnic and Mother's Day raffle, while June saw the relaunch of stewardship groups, though their momentum waned. A major milestone was completing the long-awaited kitchen renovation, which had been nearly 20 years in the making. This achievement enabled events like a volunteer appreciation brunch and the Obon festival, where the kitchen's new capabilities proved invaluable.

Outreach efforts gained traction as the temple returned to the Burke Lake Community Festival, led by Ed Sams. Additionally, Ekoji hosted the first hybrid Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) conference, planned collaboratively with other temples. This event not only strengthened regional ties but also generated approximately \$5,000 in profits.

Facility improvements were another key focus, with significant issues like roof leaks, fire alarm malfunctions, and a deteriorating retaining wall being addressed. The hiring of a facilities maintenance manager, skilled in HVAC and plumbing, marked a pivotal step in proactively managing the temple's infrastructure. His expertise has already saved costs by resolving equipment failures and maintenance challenges.

Membership. However, membership remained a concern, with numbers declining from 89 to 77 full members. Contributing factors included the absence of a full-time minister, volunteer burnout, and the lack of a formal membership committee. The discussion emphasized redefining membership to encompass not just financial contributions but also active participation and a sense of belonging. Suggestions included fostering growth through community services, enhanced hospitality, and partnerships while retaining the temple's close-knit atmosphere.

2024 Ekoji Survey Results. A survey revealed a divide between the desire for growth and the need to maintain a connected Sangha. Proposed solutions included outreach efforts like open houses, volunteer appreciation events, and the formation of a membership committee to engage newcomers. Simple gestures such as welcoming greeters and refreshments were highlighted as effective ways to make visitors feel at home.

2025 Plans and Discussion. The meeting then transitioned to discussing 2025 plans, survey results, and reflections from Reverend Rye. The survey showed that most members valued the temple for spiritual growth, community, and rituals, with smaller groups focused on cultural heritage and education. The board expressed gratitude for the dedication of its members during a challenging year, and announced upcoming events aimed at enriching Buddhist education and spirituality. Notable plans include workshops and seminars by leaders like Reverend Melissa Opal, Bishop Harada, and former Bishop Umezu, covering topics like crossover Buddhists, Buddhist yoga, and Shin Buddhist teachings.

Reverend Rye commended the Sangha for overcoming challenges, particularly during the transition to hybrid events in the post-pandemic era. He emphasized the importance of utilizing shared resources and training to bolster support for minister assistants and sustain the temple's growth. Reflecting on Ekoji's evolution, he expressed optimism for continued collaboration and innovation in 2025.

Board elections proceeded smoothly, retaining current members and welcoming Jesse Barrick to the team. Financial reports by our board's treasurer, Maya Horio, highlighted a stable year, despite ongoing challenges. The kitchen renovation, while slightly over budget, was completed successfully. New approaches, such as mini sponsorships during Obon, helped offset costs. However, Sangha donations fell short of expectations, prompting discussions about revisiting membership dues and encouraging contributions to support the temple's operations.

Financial updates revealed that the temple's liquid assets remained steady despite significant expenditures. Growth in the Morgan Stanley investment portfolio contributed to a modest increase in funds. While Obon income exceeded projections, parsonage rental income temporarily decreased due to a vacancy. The proposed 2025 budget sought to balance income and expenses, including a new \$15,600 maintenance contract to address aging facilities. Adjustments like raising projected Obon income and maintaining conservative donation estimates ensured the budget was realistic. Provisions for guest speakers were also included to align with the Sangha's focus on spiritual growth.

Discussions about Obon planning emphasized the need for volunteer recruitment to expand capacity beyond this year's 500-person limit. Improvements to sound equipment and permit compliance were identified as priorities.

Virtual Guest Speakers. Suggestions for engaging guest speakers who could stay for post-Dharma discussions highlighted ways to deepen connections and foster growth.

Redesigned Website. The meeting also featured a presentation by Jim Daniel, the temple's webmaster, showcasing a newly redesigned website. Accessible via a demo link (<https://demo.ekoji.org>), the site aims to be welcoming and user-friendly, offering information for both newcomers and members. Key features include clear navigation, integrated social media links, event calendars, and service details. A separate members-only site is in development to house internal resources and enhance communication. Feedback from attendees was encouraged to refine the site's effectiveness in representing the temple.

Conclusion of Annual Meeting. The meeting concluded with expressions of gratitude to the many individuals and groups who contribute to Ekoji's success. Ministers, minister's assistants, board members, and volunteers were acknowledged for their dedication, along with the continued support of BDK America and the BCA. Opportunities for involvement, such as assisting with technology or co-chairing events, were highlighted. The session ended with a motion to adjourn, which passed unanimously.

Reverend Kurt Rye led the closing Gassho, leaving attendees with a renewed sense of purpose and gratitude for the community's shared commitment to the Dharma and each other.





APPROVED 2025 EKOJI BUDGET

By Maya Horio, Treasurer

The operating budget for 2025 that was approved at the annual meeting largely mirrors the operating budget that we used for 2024, with one exception—adding our new facility maintenance contract in the list of expenses.

INCOME:

Changes include an increase from \$30,000 to \$43,500 in our grant request to BDK America and a decrease from \$500 to \$100 in our expected administrative income. BDK America graciously agreed to this increase, which will cover most of our personnel expenses and a portion of our new facility maintenance contract. Our administrative income, comprised primarily of bank interest and dividend payments, has decreased over the years as we moved most of our financial reserves out of our bank money market account and into our investment portfolio funds.

INCOME	BUDGET
BDK Grant	\$43,500
Sangha Donations	\$65,000
Fundraising	\$5,000
General Administration	\$100
Education Activities	\$1,000
Rentals- Parsonage	\$38,000
Rentals	\$1,000
Investment Fund	\$0
Obon/Virtual Fundraisers	\$21,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$174,600

EXPENSES:

Changes in this category mostly related to our facility line items, with a slight uptick in our anticipated BCA/EDC expenses from \$15,500 to \$17,500. We increased the general anticipated facility expenses from \$47,500 to \$50,000 to account for maintaining our aging physical campus. We added our new facility maintenance contract, and subsequently reduced our emergency “miscellaneous facilities” line item from \$15,000 to \$10,000, in the hopes that regularly conducting preventative maintenance of our building will help reduce emergency repairs.

EXPENSES	BUDGET
General Administration	\$7,500
Temple Personnel	\$50,000
BCA/EDC	\$17,500
Fundraising Events	\$1,000
Parsonage	\$1,000
Buddhist RC Education	\$7,500
Dharma School	\$100
Outreach/PR	\$2,000
Hospitality	\$400
Technology Support	\$6,000
Facilities	\$50,000
<i>Facility Maint. Contract</i>	<i>\$15,600</i>
<i>Misc. Facilities</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
Obon/Virtual Fundraisers	\$6,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$174,600
NET PROFIT/(LOSS)	\$0

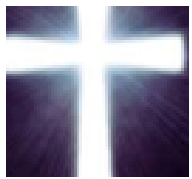
EDITOR'S KIBITZING

DECEMBER – A TIME FOR FAITH, A TIME OF GRATITUDE

By Ken Nakamura

For us Buddhists, when we think of the month of December, it seems Christmas comes to mind with all the holiday decorations, Christmas trees, beautiful songs, and the exchange of presents. When our kids were in high school, their friends, who knew our family was Buddhist, were surprised that we put up a tree and went the “whole 9-Yards” on Christmas. Our kids would respond if we didn't celebrate Christmas, “how else would we get gifts!” And then as Buddhists, of course, we would think of the observance of Bodhi Day. This day marks the day that Siddhartha awakened to his enlightenment, his understanding of the Buddha-Dharma. It is celebrated with a special service at the temple in a quieter, more introspective way, a way of gratitude.

Interestingly, we seem to share this December with three other major world religions – Christianity, Islam, Judaism. It seems that the causes and conditions, from time immemorial, have brought us to this time of year to address our spiritual side, and touch the transcendental. Either by the teachings of our religion or by example of our spiritual leaders, we can find a kindness and a wisdom that underlies our sense of reality that we perceive. And from our faith in this basic kindness and wisdom, we continue to maintain our hope and inspiration with which we can go forward, each following our own path.



CHRISTMAS. With all the Christmas ads and music on the radio starting even before we have Thanksgiving, it's hard not to think of December and Christmas. Sometimes you can miss the religious side of Christmas, but as we come closer to the day, the religious side comes out and we take time to think of this day Jesus Christ was born. This man, who many believe was the son of God and man 's savior, stands as the source of hope and salvation for millions of people over the centuries around the world. And saying that we should turn “our swords into plowshares” and bring peace on earth with good will to all men is a great message. I think, whether we believe in Christ as the Son of God or not, the important message he brings to us, and the inspiration he has provided to mankind for many centuries, allows us to celebrate with our Christian friends and say, “Merry Christmas”.



MOTHER'S DAY. Islam has two official holidays: Eid al-Fitr which marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting, and Eid al-Adha, is referred to as the Feast of Sacrifice which, in part, marks the end of the period for the annual Pilgrimage to Mecca. While the exact dates for the month of Ramadan, and Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha change because the dates are based on the lunar and not the Gregorian calendar, they do not generally occur in December. But other Islamic Observances are celebrated in 2024 December. Among these is the celebration of Fatimah bint Muhammad, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad.

(4 Major Religions and December - Cont. on Pg. 18)

Fatimah has been revered as the archetype for a Muslim women. She was highly spiritual and devoted to Islam. She is said to have the personality traits of humility, spirituality, kindness and generosity. Fatimah passed away, quite young, a few months after the death of her father, the Prophet Muhammad. The cause of her death is not clear.

However, Fatimah's memory and legacy lives on in the Islamic world, not only through the feats of her family, but also because of the moral and religious values that she held to be important for herself and her family. Her sons, the grandsons of the Prophet Muhammad, are venerated as imams (spiritual leaders), and so Fatimah is called the "Mother of Imams" and is revered by both Sunni and Shia Muslims. Commemorating the day of her birth, Iran celebrates this day as Mother's Day. "Happy Mother's Day."



Chanukah (Hanukkah), The Festival of Light. Chanukah celebrates the 2nd century rededication of the great Second Temple of Jerusalem when a small group of Jewish warriors, the Maccabees, liberated the city from foreign control. The leader of the Maccabees ordered his followers to cleanse the Temple, rebuild the altar, and light the menorah. As they lit the menorah, they found that there was only a day's supply of the ritually pure oil. What is now called the "Chanukah Miracle", the candles of the menorah stayed lit for eight days allowing time to find more oil.

Today, in each Jewish household, an eight-day celebration is observed when each evening, a menorah candle is lit. Traditionally, the menorah is placed where it can be seen from the outside to symbolize the spreading of G*d's light to all nations and bringing light to darkness. "Happy Chanukah!"



BODHI DAY. Ekoji's founding minister, Rev. Kenryu Tsuji writes in his book, *The Heart of the Buddha-Dharma*, in spite of the unsurpassed beauty and comfort of the life of a prince, Siddhartha felt deep despair as he sought to seek the Light of Truth, to seek answers to why we suffer. When he was 29, he left his family and his royal life to become an aesthetic.

For six years he mingled with ascetics and hermits practicing the difficult system of salvation they taught and subjecting his body to the severest of disciplines, but like the life of luxury, he realized that the extremes of an asceticism led him nowhere. "The truest path to Enlightenment, he found lay in patient and systematic examination of all aspects of life and discovering the solution to its sufferings," wrote Rev. Tsuji. He continues:

As he quietly meditated under the Bodhi Tree, there developed in him a deep spiritual insight into the nature of existence. When the day ended ..., Siddhartha attained Enlightenment, the highest wisdom man has yet reached. One by one the heavy doubts of life and death, of sorrow – its cause and cure—vanished, the great mystery finally had been solved. He became Buddha, the Fully Enlightened One.

For his remaining 45 years, the Buddha walked throughout northeastern India, explaining the Dharma to a growing Sangha that covered the Indian subcontinent during those years. He taught us lessons of the Buddha-Dharma. He taught us about life and death, about suffering and its causes and cure. He taught us about impermanence, interdependence, oneness, about the laws of cause and effect, and so much more. But equally important, by his example and his teachings, he taught us that we, too, though "householder Buddhists" with all our faults of the Three Poisons, would become a Buddha.



2024-2025 DHARMA SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

By Maya Horio and Kim Nguyen, Co-Superintendents



Dharma School classes are open to all kids ages 4 to 18, and our monthly Family Service is open to all sangha members and children of all ages. Dharma School students are split typically by age into the following classes: Pre-Kindergarten-1st grade; Elementary; Intermediate; and Advanced classes.

Each class aims to instill in our students a basic understanding of Buddhist terms and concepts, working towards our overall Dharma School goal of enabling our students to be able to explain Buddhism and the Shin sect of Buddhism in their own words by the time they graduate.

We also help the students learn to lead and chant at least two sutras on their own, understanding that many of our students will be physically distant from a Buddhist temple at various times in their post-Dharma School life.

SEPTEMBER 2024	OCTOBER 2024	NOVEMBER 2024 (Eshinni and Kakushinni Day & Pet Memorial)	DECEMBER 2024 (Bodhi Day)
01 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 08 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 15 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 22 0930 Teacher Work Day 29 0930 - 10-30 am DS Info Session	06 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 13 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 20 0930 - 1030 am Service & EBL Conference DS Home Altar Project 27 0930 - 1030 am DS Classes	03 0930 - 1030 DS Classes (Daylight Savings Ends) 10 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 17 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 24 0930 - 1030 DS Classes	01 0930 - 1030 Joint DS Classes 08 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 15 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 22 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 29 NO DHARMA SCHOOL
JANUARY 2025 (Ho Onko Service)	FEBRUARY 2025 (Nirvana Day)	MARCH 2025 (Higan)	APRIL; 2025 (Hanamatsuri)
05 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 12 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 19 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 26 0930 - 1030 DS Classes	02 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 09 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 16 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 23 0930 -1030 DS Classes	02 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 09 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 16 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 23 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 30 NO DHARMA SCHOOL	06 1045 - 1200 Special Joint Hanamatsuri Service 13 NO DHARMA SCHOOL 20 0930 - 1030 DS Classes 27 0930 - 1030 Joint DS Classes
MAY 2025 (Gotan - E)	JUNE 2025		
04 0930-1030 DS Classes 11 0930 - 1030 DS Service & Tsuji Center Cleanup 16 0930-1030 DX Classes 26 NO DHARA SCHOOL	01 0930 JOINT END OF THE YEAR DS PARTY		



JOIN THE EKOJI VIRTUAL MOVIE DISCUSSION SESSIONS



*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, **except this December 2024 when the Holiday Season is a busy time for everyone**. In our discussions, we are led by Ann and Joren Stegner. RSVP for the Zoom link can be done from Ekoji.org. Our get-togethers online is casual, wanders away from the movie a lot, and is always a chance to hear the Dharma through the movie and the discussion, regardless of whether it was on topic. The discussion for November was the 2008 Movie "Doubt" with Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams, and Viola Davis.

The movie for January 2025 is "200 Meters". The film revolves around a family in the Palestinian city of Tulkarm, separated by the Israeli wall, and the efforts of the father who tries to visit his son on the other side of the wall. The Zoom discussion will be **at 2:00 on January 15**. It can be watched on Amazon Prime, HBO Max, Apple TV, Peacock, and other streaming services for a small fee.



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 membership portal at: <http://ekojobuddhisttemple.wildapricot.org>

ALL OUR WELCOME -- COME AS YOU ARE



UPON THEIR SHOULDERS EKOJI'S PAST -- OUR PRESENT

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 2024 the years for Special Family Memorial Services are: 2023 – 1st Year; 2022 – 3rd Year; 2018 – 7th Year; 2012 – 13th Year; 2008 – 17th Year; 2000 – 25th Year; 1992 – 33rd Year; 1975 – 50th Year; 1925 – 100th.

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

November	<u>DECEMBER</u>	January
Jame "Jimmy" Kitahara 6/14/1905 – 11/ /1992	Takashi "Tak" Horita 12/19/2007	Evelyn Kitahara 4/22/1918 - 1/12/2001
	Richard "Dick" Carl 12/13/2022	Mariko Tamura Horita 12/4/1925 – 1/13/2016
		Dr. Ray Murakami 1/24/2018
		Yukio Kawamoto 11/13/1919 – 1/7/2019
		Shigeki James "Shig" Sugiyama 12/19/1927 - 1/14/2019
		Richard Kenichi "Dick" Amano 7/11/1947 – 1/15/2019
		John Sutch 1/20/1932 – 1/11/2020
		Sayoko Omori Kawamoto 3/23/1922 – 1/31/2023



In Gassho

Dana from October 27, 2024 to November 25, 2024

John Barnes
 Jane Blechman
 Jessica Brooks
 Eugenia Burkes
 Loredana Calin
 Grant Clark
 Joseph Crilley
 Mahkameh Doroud
 Matthew Doubrava
 Stanley Fujii
 Francis and Mary Garrison
 Joseph Gotchy

Marisa and Tamon Honda
 Maya and Brant Horio
 Emily Ihara
 Cheryl Kameda
 Yuko Keicho
 Norm and Gail Kondo
In memory of Jimmy Kitahara
 Norm and Gail Kondo
 Sandra Lukic-Dapoingy
 Thea Maggard
 Richard Malone & Rick Ware
 Arlene and Wayne Minami
 Sho Morimoto

Lisa and Greg Nakamura
 Ken and Nori Nakamura
 Donna Omata
*in honor of Bob Matsueda's
 Buddhist Yoga Class.*
 Linda Pettit-Waldner
 Annabelle Racquel Miller
 Jerry Rankin
 Edward Sams
 Roger Scott
 Joanna and Mike Therway
 Pilar Uelmen
 Seabrook Buddhist Temple



We're excited to announce the return of Echo Ekoji!

Join us for a **conversation with Nori and Ken Nakamura**, a part of the founding members of Ekoji Buddhist Temple.

In this episode, you'll:

- Discover the origins of Ekoji: Hear firsthand accounts of the temple's early days.
- Gain valuable insights: Explore the challenges and triumphs of our time.
- Uncover the source of Nori's boundless energy: Learn how her Buddhist values fuel her positive outlook and more.

Don't miss this inspiring episode!

<https://youtu.be/1jcs-0NNvCY>

SANGHA SCOOPS

By Ken Nakamura



As “householder Buddhists”, we are supposed to understand about impermanence and death -- it is natural and part of the nature of things. However, because we are householder, we also feel the sadness of the passing of people we know.

So it is with the passing of **Peter Francis Golemboski, who** was born on May 14, 1966, and passed away on October 9, 2024. We understand Peter had recovered from tracheal cancer a few years ago but never fully recovered from the cancer treatments.

Peter attended services at Ekoji and also helped take care of Ekoji during the 2010's. Always dressed very casually, we understand he was with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in the Office of Special Operations. We didn't talk much about his work, but we remember him as guy with a really good heart, laughing and telling great stories, and always being very helpful in temple activities. He also had a habit of smoking a lot, and tried many times, altho unsuccessfully, to quit.

Peter was raised a Catholic and it seems he went back to Catholicism with his funeral at Nativity Catholic Church here in Burke. We, at Ekoji, were privileged to know Peter and shared our faith and our beliefs with him as he faced his health issues. We send our deepest condolences to Peter's family and many friends.



This is a mural that **Donna Omata's son, George Hiromitsu Hubbard** just painted in Baltimore City. Hiro was one of ten Baltimore muralist selected to paint permanent murals on the exterior wall of the Baltimore Convention Center on Pratt Street, the main artery in downtown

Baltimore City. The Ravens Football Stadium, The Orioles Baseball Park, National Aquarium of Baltimore, and Baltimore's Inner Harbor are all located a short walk to the murals. The murals face the Thurgood Marshall Federal Court House. Hiro's mural focuses on the B&O Railroad, which is the oldest continuously running railroad in the United States. Hiro was born and raised in Baltimore City. Donna's late husband's maternal ancestors have roots in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Hiro is a Yonsei or fourth generation Japanese American on Donna's side of the family tree.

Ken and Nori Nakamura recently took a trip to the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles to join her brother, Masato Akahoshi, and sister Toshiko Kujo, to place a stamp below the names of their relatives and Ken's relatives, who had been incarcerated in one of the 75 incarceration camps during World War II. For Ken and Nori, placing a stamp by their relatives name was in validation and in remembrance and gratitude to them for what they had endured.

Rev. Dr. Duncan Williams, who has spoken at Ekoji, led a five-year project to collect the names of over 126,000 Japanese and Americans of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated by Executive Order and without due process of law. This book is called the *Ireicho* will be on exhibit in Los Angeles until the end of December. For the exhibit, they had gathered a jar of sand from each of the War Relocation Authority (WRA), Department of Justice, and Department of the Army camps. Dr. George Tanabe, who will be speaking at Ekoji in January, was part of the project to collect the sand. Norman and Gail Kondo have also earlier stamped the names of their family and friends who were incarcerated during World War II.



Nori watching brother, Masato, stamping his own name in the *Ireicho*.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, DECEMBER 2024 I

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

- CHILDREN'S DHARMA SCHOOL - 9:30 -10:30 EVERY EXCEPT THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH WHEN NO CLASS IS SCHEDULED.
- HYBRID SERVICE, 11:00AM WITH AN AFTER-SERVICE HYBRID DISCUSSION IN THE HONDO.

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

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

MONTHLY

- FIRST SUNDAY TEMPLE CLEANUP, 9:30AM – 10:30AM . ALL ARE INVITED.
- SHOTSUKI SERVICE, .11:00AM – FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH. DURING THE CHANTING OF A SUTRA, SANGHA MEMBERS WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE DURING THAT PARTICULAR MONTH IN ANY PRIOR YEAR ARE INVITED TO GO BEFORE THE ALTAR TO GASSHO AND BURN INCENSE IN LOVING MEMORY AND GRATITUDE FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS PASSED.

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

- NEW YEAR'S EVE (JOYA-E) SERVICE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31 AT 7:00 PM IN THE HONDO. JOIN US AS WE MEDITATE ON THE COUNTLESS BLESSINGS WE HAVE RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, AND EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO OUR PARENTS, THE NATION, ALL BEINGS, AND AMIDA BUDDHA.
- NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1 AT 11:00 AM IN THE HONDO.
- MOVIE GROUP DISCUSSION, , 3RD SUNDAY 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, and it has a beautiful Voice that sings praises to the Buddha, the sutras, and the words of the Buddha.



YOUR 2024 TEMPLE LEADERS

SUPERVISING MINISTER
REVEREND KURT RYE

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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

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