

NOVEMBER 2024

KALAVINKA

A NEWSLETTER OF EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17. 2024 -- OUR HYBRID
SANGHA ANNUAL MEETING
IN THE HONDO - 1:00 TO ?**



**PLEASE JOIN US AND LISTEN, LEARN, SHARE YOUR IDEAS
AND CONCERNS, AND VOTE ON TEMPLE ISSUES --
IT'S OUR TIME / OUR VOICE**



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84,000 THOUGHTS

I TAKE REFUGE IN ...

By Rev. Kurt Rye

Even though I moved a year ago, I'm still unpacking and rearranging things. I smile to myself when I remember the Buddhist teachings of not being materialistic. I love books, and even after a cross-county move, I still own more than I should. Going through my books, it reflects different periods of my life. I still own a lot of books on psychology, which reflect my undergraduate degree, and my first career.

I worked in the public mental health field for over twenty years before I became ordained as a Buddhist minister. During this period, I was an active member at the Seattle Betsuin attending Sunday service and as many as they offered. I came to appreciate the role of Sangha (Buddhist community) in the Buddhist path. I came to realize how I need more than books or lectures to expand my understanding and appreciation of the Dharma. I needed to be part of a spiritual community of others working through life, trying to understand how the Dharma can influence and enrich our daily lives.

By attending the Sunday services, I was introduced to many people with different backgrounds. At the Seattle Betsuin after the Sunday service, we would have what was called Dharma Exchange. We moved to the dining room where someone would present a Buddhist topic followed by a discussion with coffee and doughnuts. This was the meeting where I got to know my fellow members at a deeper level and heard about their life experiences. For several years, we would have an older woman who came every Sunday, but was consistently ten to fifteen minutes late. She would always sit down after service had begun. She was dressed very formally, her outfit had to be from the 1960's. She did not engage with others, and at times, could be heard talking to herself. Many members were frustrated by her behavior, and some even said she only came for the doughnuts.

Several years passed and she still attended every Sunday with the same late arrival time, staying to herself. At this time, I was transferred to a different department in the mental health center. My new position was working in the group therapy program, which was at a different complex than I worked at before. My first day at the new position, my temple friend came in and we looked at each other. She was one of the centers members. She was not dressed in her Sunday finest, much more relaxed. We smiled at each other and did not exchange a word at the center or the following Sunday at Temple.

(I Take Refuge In ... Cont on Pg 2)

(Rev. Rye, I Take Refuge In ...”, Cont. from Pg 1)

We never did have a personal conversation but she would talk about going to a special place on the weekends, and how the people made her feel welcome, during the group sessions at the clinic. She also expressed, to the group, that she looked forward to her visit each week to this place. She felt she was free by letting go of her daily life, and feeling relaxed and comfortable. It was not only her words, but her emotion that she expressed that made me realize how important going to the Seattle Betsuin every Sunday was to her. I was also shocked to find that she took public transportation, and it took her two hours on the bus to attend service.

This woman exemplified the concept of Sangha in Jodo Shinshu. She, through her dedication of coming to the Seattle temple every Sunday, though it was a two-hour bus ride, was evidence of how important hearing the Dharma, and being part of a Sangha, was to her. She did not need to be told by the Sangha that she was welcomed, she felt it. She did not need to express herself verbally, she just existed.

As stated in the Three Treasures, “I take refuge in the Sangha. May we, with all sentient beings, become units in true accord, in a harmony with all things.”

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/TZMLCOGSQTOTGDIRTNTT5EYDBZXK9F2OVZJO](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tzmlcogsqtotgdirtntt5eydbzxk9f2ovzjo)



CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF THE BCA AND BEYOND

By: Andrea Chapman

Last September, I had the privilege of attending the Women of BCA workshop in Berkeley, California, a celebration of the remarkable contributions and leadership of women within the Buddhist Churches of America. Held at the Jodo Shinshu Center on September 27th and 28th, the event drew women (and men) from across the BCA. Notably, Rev. Henry Adams joined us in person.

The weekend was filled with uplifting support and laughter, offering a glimpse into a world where the leadership, compassion, and creativity of women are fully embraced. We honored those who have tirelessly worked behind the scenes, often unrecognized, to support male leaders who have historically dominated the ministry and leadership roles within our tradition.

In her keynote address, "Fears, Tears, and Joy in My Ministry," Rev. Candice Shibata highlighted the profound influence of Lady Kujo, the sixth child of the 21st Abbot Myonyo. She shared how Lady Kujo's poetry has guided her through the anxieties and responsibilities of her ministry, particularly the fear of aging. Rev. Shibata's authenticity and vulnerability resonated deeply, as we laughed and cried together, recognizing the shared human experiences that shape our paths.

Following Rev. Shibata, Rev. Melissa Opel, the funniest and newest minister in the BCA, spoke about the power of perspective. She shared her journey from Catholicism to Buddhism, highlighting the impact of harmful beliefs she harbored for decades, and her search for belonging. Her story offered hope and inspiration, reminding us of the transformative power of the Dharma.

I was honored to participate in a panel discussion with Sydney Shiroyama and Sumi Tanabe, two extraordinary women who have made significant contributions to the BCA. While Sydney and Sumi shared their experiences growing up within our tradition, I offered a vision for the future, emphasizing the importance of innovation and meeting people where they are. I discussed initiatives at Ekoji, such as our after-service discussion group, podcast, and my role on the BCA's Vision and Strategic Planning Committee.

As the weekend concluded, it became clear that we all benefit from the invaluable contributions of the pioneering women who have shaped our tradition. Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni, wife and daughter of Shinran Shonin, respectively, played crucial roles in preserving and propagating his teachings. Today, each of us, in our own way, carries on this legacy.

·
("Celebrating the Women", Cont. on Pg
4)

(Women of the BCA and Beyond, Cont from 3)

The opening and closing messages, delivered by Bishop Marvin Harada and Rev. Hitomi Kuwahara, can be viewed on the CBE YouTube Channel, along with the keynote addresses. This event was made possible by a grant from the Hemera Foundation, the support of the Buddhist Churches of America, and the dedicated efforts of a remarkable committee of women who worked tirelessly to create this unforgettable experience. My deep gratitude to each of you.

At Ekoji on November 24, our 11:00 service will be honoring Lady Eshinni, and Lady Kakushinni and their, often overlooked, contributions to the development of Shin Buddhism.

CBE YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/BCACenterforBuddhistEducation>.

Namo Amida Butsu

HYBRID EKOJI SANGHA ANNUAL MEETING -- SUNDAY, NOV, 17, 2024 -- 1:00 ET

On Sunday, November 17, 2024, from 1 - 2:30pm ET, we will come together as members of Ekoji for our hybrid Annual Meeting of the Sangha.

For in-person attendees, the meeting will take place in the Hondo. For our on-line Members, the Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwvfuGvqDgqGtYoF8x7V47pSR1-nYcjl66G>

A light luncheon will be served at 12 pm for those attending the annual meeting.

Tentative Agenda for the Sangha Annual Meeting

Opening Gassho

Attendance and Zoom Protocol

Presidents' 2024 Review

Rev. Kurt Rye – Supervising Minister Report

Review / Vote on 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Election of New Officers and Trustees

2024 Financial Report

2025 Proposed Budget

New Website Reveal

Closing Gassho



Growing Our Sanghas

By Rev. Bishop Marvin Harada

From BCA Connect - Bishop's Message

August 12, 2024

Presently, our BCA is faced with the challenge of growing our Sanghas and our membership.

I might have mentioned before that over the past 10 years, our BCA has lost 28% of our membership. Future decline threatens the existence of many of our churches and temples that are holding on to a small number of members and struggle to meet their budgets and to keep their doors open.

How do we face that challenge for the future? Is religion, as a whole, on the decline? Many Christian churches also face a serious decline of membership. Other Buddhist schools are not growing rapidly either, but they are much larger in numbers than we are.

This year, our BCA celebrates its 125th year. From nothing, our churches and temples were built well over 100 years ago. Members were struggling themselves to earn a living, especially amidst harsh prejudice and discrimination against Japanese. The sacrifices and dedication of our pioneering members and ministers are incalculable. Without their efforts, we would not be celebrating our 125th anniversary of our BCA.

I think that our pioneering members and ministers saw and felt a tremendous value in the teachings, in the Nembutsu. That is what motivated them to sacrifice so much to establish our churches, temples and Sanghas. The same can be said of the Buddhist masters and teachers who propagated Buddhism from India to China and on to other countries.

Monks traversed mountains, deserts and oceans to bring the sutras and Buddhist texts to foreign lands, to share the Dharma. After arriving in their new land, they had to learn the language of that land, then translate and share the teachings in a way that the people of that country could understand, practice and follow.

Other monks and seekers left their homelands to learn the Dharma or to seek enlightenment in a foreign land. The great Zen Master Dogen could not find enlightenment in Japan and traveled to China by boat, at the risk of his life, to find a true teacher and master in China. After encountering a teacher, Dogen returned to Japan and established the Eihei-ji monastery that exists to this day.

(“Growing Our Sanghas” Cont: on Pg 6)

I think we are at a crossroads of our ministry here in the United States. When I say “ministry,” I don’t mean just ministers. It takes all of us to propagate the Dharma effectively. It takes ministers and members to work together to maintain and provide the facilities from which the Dharma can be shared. We are now learning new ways to share the Dharma virtually, through YouTube videos, podcasts and other forms of transmission, but the core experience is still the in-person encounter of the Dharma through living Buddhists.

We ministers have to give Dharma talks and conduct study classes in a manner that resonates with people, both our own members and newcomers. Our Sanghas have to be warm and inviting, so that visitors will return a second and third time, and maybe even stay with our Sanghas.

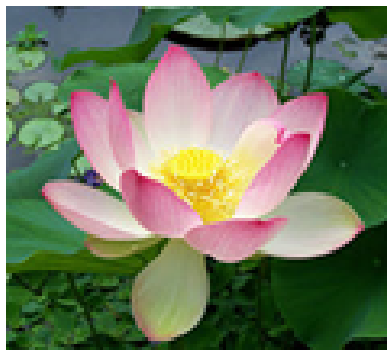
Our boards and temple officers must lead our Sanghas effectively, working together, being open to change and trying new and innovative ways to adapt for the future.

And, first and foremost, we must all be listeners of the Dharma, as this is the core of our Shin Buddhist tradition. As we listen sincerely, others will also come to listen. As we come to appreciate the Dharma, others will come to appreciate the Dharma with us. As we come to live a life of gratitude, others will come to want to live a life of gratitude as well.

Recently, I saw an old friend whom I met in Japan decades ago. He shared a wonderful metaphor. He said that we have to be like charcoal. Once a piece of charcoal is lit, it begins to radiate heat and warmth to others around it. That is what sharing the Dharma is like, to be like a piece of charcoal. But first we have to be “lit” by the light of the Dharma ourselves.

That to me is how we will and must grow in the future. I hope that we can all work together in that regard.

Namo Amida Butsu



EDITOR'S KIBITZINGS

By Ken Nakamura

Sometimes life can get so busy that we forget or don't see what services our Temple has to offer and share with us as we walk our Buddhist Path. So, with our annual meeting approaching, I tried to make a list. In gassho, Ken

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 and Memorial Services
- Other Special 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

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

Please contact the Temple to help establish the link with Rev. Rye.

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 seminar with BCA Bishop, Rev Marvin Harada on "The Benefits and Values of Shin Buddhist Teachings".
- *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 Temple Activities
- Monthly Kalavinka newsletter including: *Rev. Rye's Thoughts, and a full Treasurers Report and Secretary's Board Minutes Report*
- In Development – a New Web Site
- Meetings with the Sangha like the Annual Meeting
- Joining in the monthly pot lucks

WORKING TOGETHER – TAKING CARE OF OUR RELIGIOUS HOME

- Participate in Ekoji's Stewardship Program
- Join the Garden Maintenance and Other Programs when the call for help goes out
- Help the Temple Financially

SHARE YOUR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS WITH YOUR TEMPLE BOARD



OCTOBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

By Michael Paul Huff, Secretary

The Ekoji Buddhist Temple Board of Directors held their meeting on October 25, 2024, discussing recent events, planning for upcoming activities, and setting the stage for our upcoming annual Sangha meeting. Here's a recap —

The meeting started with positive feedback on the recent Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) conference hosted at Ekoji. This gathering was a huge success, thanks to the hard work of volunteers and the strength of Ekoji's facilities. Attendees admired Ekoji's unique Onaijin, and they were impressed with the audio-visual system, which worked seamlessly throughout the event.

Reverend Rye provided an update on his ministry work, focusing on his role as a support for both the temple's Ministerial Assistants (MAs) and Sangha members. He also discussed ways to improve his schedule for serving multiple temples, including Ekoji.

Next, the board reviewed and approved the 2025 budget. Maya led this discussion, highlighting the importance of balancing income and expenses. Ekoji's main sources of income come from the BDK grant, member donations, and parsonage rentals. A recently approved BDK grant will cover essential costs, and a new maintenance contract for the facilities will help prevent emergency repairs.

Upcoming events include a yoga workshop organized by Bob Matsuda, a leader at the Jodo Shinshu Center in California. This "Buddhist yoga" program, funded by the Dharma Forward campaign, is expected to be free for all and will be held in Ekoji's Hondo. The board hopes it will be a fun way to bring people to the temple and introduce them to Buddhism.

We're also looking forward to a visit from Bishop Harada in January, during which he may lead a workshop if his schedule permits. Another workshop is planned for February with Reverend Brian Nagata, with the theme "Run, Don't Walk to the Shin Path." The event is set to align with Nirvana Day celebrations and will be a time for learning and fellowship.

In addition, a work party is scheduled for November 9 to spruce up the Tsuji building. Projects will include deep-cleaning the kitchen, moving out old bookcases, and hanging pictures. This event is a great opportunity for volunteers to support the temple in a hands-on way.

(Oct. Board of Directors Report, Cont. on Pg 9)

Finally, the board discussed the upcoming National Council meeting in February, which will be held virtually. Members are encouraged to attend, as it's a great way to learn more about the broader Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) community. Whether you're a voting delegate or just interested in seeing how it works, it's a fantastic learning opportunity.

The Ekoji Board of Directors is grateful for everyone's support, hard work, and dedication. As we wrap up the year, we look forward to more meaningful events, community efforts, and opportunities for Sangha members to grow together. Stay tuned for more updates and ways to get involved!

2024 EKOJI SANGHA SURVEY

A GENTLE REMINDER

Earlier this year, your Ekoji Board sent out a 2024 Ekoji Sangha Survey to better understand our Sanghas views, concerns, opinions, and needs that Ekoji can help meet .

To better understand the Sanghas' needs and preferences, the Sangha was asked to participate in a brief survey. The responses will help the Board identify areas for improvement, develop new initiatives, and ensure that our temple continues to meet the needs of our community.

The link to the survey is: <https://forms.gle/kTvqAu2q81VqtFjW8>

PLEASE PARTICIPATE.



Monthly Treasurer’s Report for October

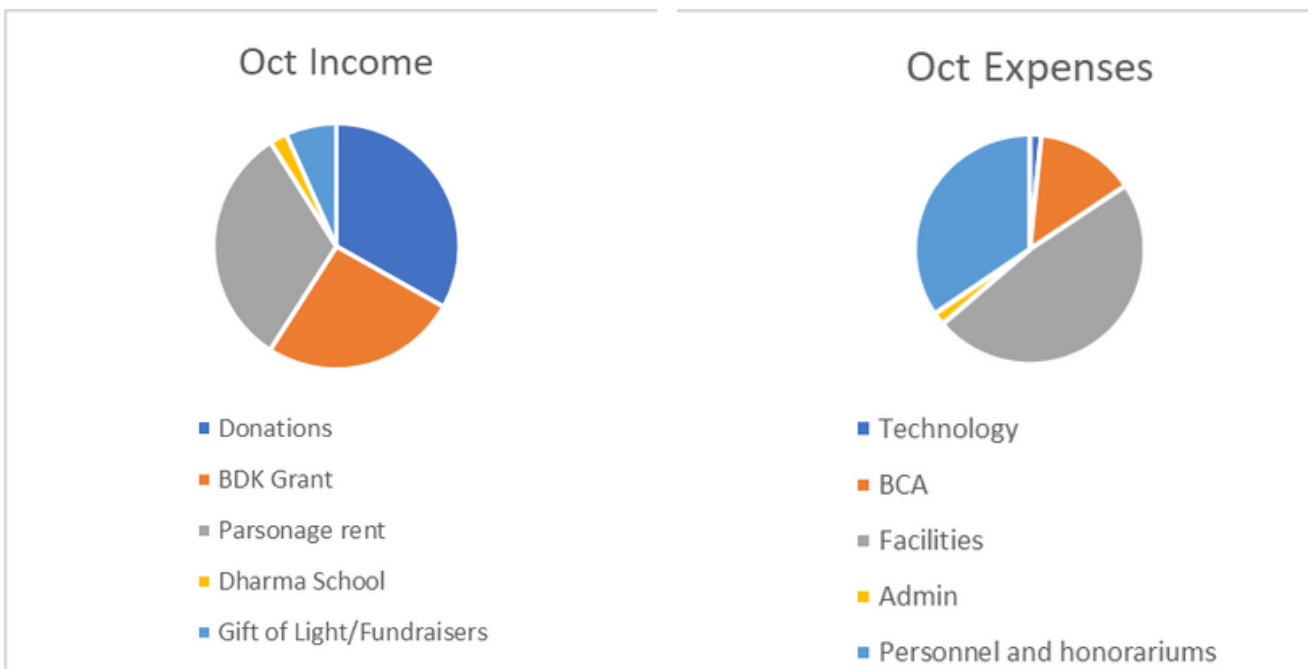
By Maya Horio, Treasurer

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.

Oct 2024 Finance Flows: Our income this month again outweighed our expenses as we welcomed guests from across the Eastern District for the 2024 Eastern Buddhist League conference. We are hopeful that we will continue this trend for the remainder of the calendar year, which will allow us to avoid drawing income from our Capital Campaign investment fund.

- **Income (\$9,655):** Sangha donations, parsonage rent, and our BDK grant were the three largest chunks of our income this month. Dharma School registration and supply fees and Gift of Light capital campaign and bookstore sales made up the rest of our income.
- **Expenses (\$8,700):** Most of our expenses this month went to facility utilities, followed by personnel payments and then BCA dues. Half of our facility payments this month went to Independence Landscaping for our landscaping upkeep and maintenance.





2024-2025 DHARMA SCHOOL YEAR -- Our Start

By Maya Horio and Kim Nguyen, Co-Superintendents



We kicked off our 2024-2025 school year this month. Like last year, each month includes two in-person Dharma School class meetings and one joint service and temple cleaning.

Our Intermediate and Advanced students chair the services and lead the chanting, and we benefit from pre-recorded Dharma talks for Ekoji's supervising minister, Rev. Rye. On service Sundays, the students also clean the classroom building—an effort that we use to remind them that we are not guests at Ekoji, and that we all have a responsibility to take care of our temple home. We will also continue hosting small “dana bites” on service Sundays, giving students opportunities to give back to the sangha and broader community in both big and small ways.

Our first Dharma School service of the school year coincided with the Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) conference. We benefited from Rev. Todd Tsuchiya, resident minister at Midwest Buddhist Temple, delivering a Dharma talk about how Halloween costumes can help us mask our fears, but showing our vulnerabilities can allow us to be our authentic selves. We recited the Golden Chain together, and in closing his talk, Rev. Todd led us in a Halloween version of the Nembutsu, reciting "Namo Amida BOO, Namo Amida BOO, Namo Amida BOO." Several Dharma School students then participated in the EBL altar-making workshop, proudly taking home their own personal altars to display in their rooms.

We have about 20 students enrolled in the Dharma School, split across four class levels this year, with students generally separated by age. 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. This year, we will also have two joint classes (one each semester) during which the older Dharma School students will deliver a lesson, which they will pre-plan, to the younger students.





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		



EKOJI'S MONTHLY STEWARDSHIP GROUPS FOR NOVEMBER

By Maya Horio

What is a Stewardship Group Anyway? Stewardship Groups is an initiative that started at Ekoji just before the Pandemic hit, and the groups came to a screeching halt. These groups had a practical side of sharing the work of taking care of our temple a month at a time. But it also has a religious side of working to strengthen Sangha ties. Besides working together in taking care of Temple activities, we hope that working together in small groups will provide each of us the opportunity to meet, get to know each other, and forge new, and deeper connections.

How were the Groups Formed? Each Sangha member has been assigned to a small, designated Stewardship Group which is led by a Board Member. There are 5 in-person groups and two virtual groups. The Stewardship Groups will be repopulated yearly.

On a Regular Basis, What Do Stewardship Groups Do? Each Group will be “on call” for a month at a time. During their “on call” month, the Group would divvey up a list of responsibilities. For the **5 in-person Groups**, these responsibilities include:

- the monthly temple clean-up,
- providing snacks for after the service social time, and cleaning-up after the snacks,
- set-up and clean-up for any temple potlucks,
- other special requests

For the two virtual Groups:

- Help capture post-service Dharma discussion highlights
- Serve as Ekoji's Sunshine Committee in periodically checking-in with other Sangha members.
- Help host virtual Sangha building initiatives

NOVEMBER STEWARDSHIP GROUP

Leader: Andrea Chapman

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT -- SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Each of the Stewardship Groups have each done one round of a monthly rotation. It is time for evaluation. For NOVEMBER, we are **asking all who can to come out on the first Sunday of November, 11/3/24, at 0930 to lend a hand in cleaning up the Temple. Thanks, the Board.**



A FUN-FILLED FALL: BEATS, BEGINNINGS, AND BIG CELEBRATIONS AND MORE AHEAD

By Emily Ihara



Picture By Brant Horio

After a well-deserved August break, Nen Daiko hit the ground running this fall! We kicked things off with a bang on a double gig day: starting our morning with the annual favorite at the Burke Centre Festival and wrapping it up with an appearance at the first US Asian Fest at One Loudoun. The energy carried over into the next weekend as we welcomed a group of eager participants to our taiko workshop for beginners.

With such enthusiasm, we're now looking forward to our "bootcamp" workshop in January and an Ei Ja Nai Ka workshop in June to get everyone ready for Obon. October has been a whirlwind of excitement, especially with the start of our new Dounen Daiko year, where we welcomed two new members, bringing the total to seven in our youth group!

Our international TaikoLove social media campaign also returned with a bang, bringing together around 45 participants, both old and new, to share posts around creative themes like anticipation, storytelling, improvisation, unboxing, and interdependence. The posts were a beautiful reminder of how taiko weaves together people from all walks of life.



Picture by Brant Horio

Our first gig of October took us to the beautiful gardens of the Washington County Museum of Art in Hagerstown, MD, for their "Floating Beauty After Dark" event. Though the drive was long, the warmth of the audience made it all worthwhile! We continued the rhythm with a "Tokyo Underground"-themed dinner performance and a heartfelt show at Bush Hill Presbyterian Church as a thank-you for letting us practice in their space during the Tsuji Center's mold remediation.

But the highlight of the year? Our 30th Anniversary Bash! Decked out in purple, we celebrated with a cruise on the Potomac, filled with good food, laughter, dancing, and memories to last a lifetime.

To top it all off, Maya delivered an inspiring talk at the 2024 Eastern Buddhist League Conference on Buddhist Taiko, sharing how Nen Daiko integrates Buddhist teachings of ego and interdependence, impermanence, mindfulness, and gratitude into our practice of taiko.

What a season it's been so far - full of beats, new beginnings, and milestones we'll never forget!



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. And are led by Ann and Joran Stegner. RSVP for the Zoom link [here](#). The discussion is casual, it wanders away from the movie a lot, and it is always a chance to hear the Dharma through the movie and the discussion, regardless of whether it was on topic.

The movie for NOVEMBER is: "Doubt" (2008). The Zoom discussion will be **at 2:00 on November 24th**. It can be watched on Paramount+ and Kanopy, and can also be rented cheaply through Amazon Prime.



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://ekojibuddhisttemple.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 NOVEMBER, we will be remembering with gratitude:

OCTOBER

Nora Mineyo Nagatani
6/20/1945 – 10/23/2021

NOVEMBER

James “Jimmy” Kitahara
6/14/1905 – 11/ /1992

DECEMBER

Takashi “Tak” Horita
12/19/2007
Richard “Dick” Carl
12/13/2022





In Gassho

Dana from September 28, 2024 to October 26, 2024

John Barnes
Jane Blechman
Joseph Crilley
Mahkameh Doroud
Jahaziel Foster
Stanley Fujii
Ruth Funai
Joseph Gotchy
Rahman Gunawan
Marisa and Tamon Honda
Michael Huff
Emily Ihara
Paul and Susan Jacques
Cheryl Kameda

Yuko Keicho
Estelle Kimizuka
Norm and Gail Kondo
Sandra Lukic-Dapoingy
Thea Maggard
Arlene Mayeda
Bert and Nancy Motonaga
Reverend Brian Nagata
Stephanie Naito
Ken and Nori Nakamura
Lisa and Greg Nakamura
John Nix
Keiko Ohtaka
Nancy Okada

Jerry Rankin
Michelle Rideout
Ayako Rosi
Edward Sams
Roger Scott
Frank Swithers
Cheral Tsuchiya
Frank Tsuchiya
Reverend Todd Tsuchiya
Ben and Gail Wong
Mikio Yamashita
Seo Yatsushiro
New York Buddhist Church



Check out Ekoji's monthly podcast interviews at <http://tinyuri.com/EchoEkoji>

This **November** Repeats Andrea and Joe's interview with Ekoji's own

BRANT AND MAYA HORIO.

The **December** Echo Ekoji finds Joe and Andrea talking with an Ekoji Legacy Family,
Ken and Nori Nakamura



**EASTERN BUDDHIST LEAGUE CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 18 -- 20, 2024**

EBL 2024: A WEEKEND OF GRATITUDE AND DHARMA

By: Andrea Chapman

The hybrid Eastern Buddhist League conference, held on October 18-20, was a resounding success, bringing together approximately 75 guests and volunteers online and in-person at Ekoji. The event was a fusion of rituals, new traditions, insightful discussions, and community building.

A Weekend of Dharma and Community

The conference, themed "Gratitude is Timeless," offered a diverse program that included:

- Fireside Chat: An intimate conversation with Eastern District ministers
- Bodhi Bingo: Part trivia and part luck, we all laughed and learned something new
- Opening Service: Rev. Ron Miyamura shared his wisdom and lived experiences in the ministry and beyond
- Keynote Address: A thought-provoking talk by Dr. Scott Mitchell on the history of American Buddhism
- Gratitude Workshop: An inspiring session with Rev. Kenji Akahoshi on the practice of living a life of gratitude
- Nen Daiko Presentation: A motivational and informative talk on Taiko by Maya Horio that demonstrated the many ways Buddhism is engrained in taiko
- Informal Book Discussion: A lighthearted conversation with Dr. Mitchell about his life and so much more!
- Butsudan Making Activity: A hands-on workshop for humans of all ages
- Dharma School Service -- Halloween themed heartfelt message offered by Rev. Todd Tsuchiya
- Closing Service: A mindful and engaging message from Rev. Patti Nakai summarizing where we have been and where we might be going
- Dharma Discussion Group: A space for sharing and learning alongside our fellow travelers
- Luncheon: One last chance to visit before saying goodbye for now

("EBL Conf Review", Cont. on Pg. 19)

A Collective Effort

The success of this event was a result of the dedicated efforts of many. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our engaging presenters listed above as well as the core committee members: Rev. Kurt Rye, Rev. Todd Tsuchiya, Rev. Chiemi Onikura Bly, Ken and Nori Nakamura, Jane Blechman, Michael Huff, David Brady, Cheral Tsuchiya, Tammy Wetzel, Erick Ishii, and Andrea Chapman. Additionally, we thank the countless volunteers who worked behind the scenes and contributed their time and talents to make the weekend a memorable experience by cleaning, setting up, cooking, staffing the audio-visual system and resetting the furnishings.

We also wish to acknowledge the support offered to us by the Ekoji Board of Directors, Eastern District Council, BDK America, Rev. Brian Nagata, and the Buddhist Churches of America.

A Highpoint and a Mission Fulfilled

For many in-person attendees, the informal book discussion with Dr. Mitchell held Saturday evening at the Fair Oaks Marriott was a highlight of the conference. It provided an opportunity for deep, meaningful dialogue and shared laughter.

As Rev. Ron Miyamura outlined, the mission of the event was to gather and listen to the Dharma. We believe this goal was achieved. For those who were unable to attend or wish to revisit the content, the keynote speakers and opening and closing services were recorded and can be accessed at:

Dr. Scott Mitchell: <https://vimeo.com/1021408332?share=copy>

Rev. Kenji Akahoshi: <https://vimeo.com/1021408531?share=copy>

Rev. Ron Miyamura: <https://vimeo.com/1021409070?share=copy>

Ekoji Highlights: <https://vimeo.com/1021463745>

Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha History:

<https://vimeo.com/1021463303/d16e38638d>

Midwest Buddhist Temple History:

<https://vimeo.com/1021463562/323ae3d6cf>

We look forward to contributing to future EBL events, and continuing our journey of spiritual growth and community connection as one greater Eastern Buddhist League Sangha.



**EASTERN BUDDHIST LEAGUE CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 18 -- 20, 2024**



Thanks to Brian and Cheral Tsuchiya, both children and adults could make and have their own Butsudan



We had more than expected for the discussion with Dr Mitchell and we needed more chairs and space



The 2024 EBL Hybrid Conference at Ekoji



Rev Rye introducing Revs, Ron Miyamura, Chiemi Onikura-Bly and Todd Tsuchiya



What happened to the Food??

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, NOVEMBER 2024

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

- **CHILDREN'S DHARMA SCHOOL**, 9:30 - 10:30 AM,, EVERY SUNDAY
- **HYBRID SERIVCES**, 11:00 AM WITH AN AFTER SRVICE HYBRID DISCUSION

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 – 10:30 AM ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE
- **SHOTSUKI SERVICE** -- DURING THE CHANTING OF THE SUTRA AT THE 11:00 AM SERVICE, SANGHA MEMBERS, WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE DURING THAT PARTICULAR MONTH IN ANY YEAR, ARE INVITED TO GO BEFORE THE NAIJIN TO OFFER GASSHO AND BURN INCENSE IN LOVING MEMORY AN GRATITUDE FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS PASSED.

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

- **SANGHA WORK PARTY, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 10:00 AM -- 12:00 PM**, We will Deep Clean the Kitchen, Move Out Some Old Furniture, and Hang Artwork in the Tsuji Center, PLEASE RSVP here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4CACAD2EA7FFC61-52744188-sangha>
- **ANNUAL PET MEMORIAL SERVICE** , Sunday, November 10 at 11:00 AM in the Hondo
- **ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SANGHA**, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1:00 PM. ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. A LIGHT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THOSE WHO PLAN TO ATTEND THE MEETING.
- **SPECIAL SERVICE IN OBSERVANCE OF ESHINNI AND KAKUSHINNI DAY**, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 11:00 AM IN THE HONDO. **POTLCK LUNCHEON** AT 12:00 PM IN THE SANGHA HALL AFTER THE SPECIAL SERVICE.
- **MOVIE GROUP DISCUSSION**, "DOUBT", SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 2:00 PM AT 2:00 PM 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

YOUR 2024 TEMPLE BOARD

PRESIDENT: Andrea Chapman
SECRETARY: Michael Huff
TREASURER: Maya Horio
MEMBER AT LARGE: Jim Daniel
MEMBER AT LARGE: Mahkameh Doroud
MEMBER AT LARGE: Nick Karen
MEMBER AT LARGE: Roger Scott

KALAVINKA STAFF

MANAGING EDITOR: Ken Nakamura
DISRIBUTION: Andrea Chapman
84,000 THOUGHTS: REV. KURT RYE
TREASURER'S REPORT: Maya Horio
DHARMA SCHOOL: Maya Horio
CALENDAR & EVENTS: Pilar Uelman
FROM THE BOARD: Andrea Chapman
NEN DAIKO: Emily Ihara

YOUR TEMPLE TRUSTEES

Kim Nguyen
Ed Sams

SERVICES

Rev. Kurt Rye, Supervising Minister to Ekoji
Rev. Erick Ishii, Minister's Assistant with Ordination (Tokudo)
Bob Shimokaji, Certified Minister's Assistant
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

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