

JANUARY 2025

KALAVINKA

A NEWSLETTER OF EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

HO-ONKO -- WITH DEEP GRATEFULNESS



ONDOKUSAN II

Nyo ra i da i hi no ondoku wa
Mi o ko ni shite mo hozubeshi
Shi shu chi shi ki no ondoku mo
Hone o kudakite mo sha su beshi
(Words by Shinran Shonin)

ONDOKUSAN II

Such is the benevolence of Amida's
great compassion
That we must strive to return it, even
to the breaking of our bodies;

Such is the benevolence of the
masters and true teachers,
That we must endeavor to repay it,
even to our bones becoming dust.



STATUE OF SHINRAN SHONIN AT OTAN I
HOMBYO IN KYOTO, JAPAN



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rev. Rye : “SAYING THE NEMBUTSU -- A Shout of Affirmation and Joy” ...	01 - 02
President Andrea Chapman: “Welcome 2025” ...	03 - 04
New 2025 Ekoji Officers Installed ...	04
EKOJI 2025 SNOW POLICY ...	05
Ekoji Sharing the Dharma: Ekoji’s Regular Activities ...	06
Mark Your Calendar -- Special Programs for January ...	07
“Run, Don’t Walk to the Shin Path”, February Seminar with Rev. Kodo Umezu and Rev. Brian Nagata ...	08
December Treasurer’s Report ...	09
2024 - 2025 Children’s Dharma School Year Calendar ...	10
Editor’s Kibitzing “Aging and the Sutra on Loving Kindness” ...	11 - 12
Ekoji Virtual Movie Discussion -- “200 Meters” ...	13
Upon Their Shoulders, Ekoji’s Shotsuki List for January ...	14
<i>In Gassho</i> , Ekoji’s Dana List ...	15
Echo Ekoji Podcast with Rev. Rye as the Guest ...	15
Sangha Scoops ...	16
January Calendar of Events and Activities ...	17



84,000 THOUGHTS

SAYING THE NEMBUTSU – A Shout of Affirmation and Joy

Rev. Kurt Rye

For this message I would like to talk about reciting the name Namu Amida Butsu. For us, as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, it is the most important teaching that can be done by anyone at any time. Reciting the name of Namu Amida Butsu, is called the Nembutsu.

Shinran Shonin, when he was 29 years old, decided to descend from Mt. Hiei because he could not find a practice to become enlightened in the Tendai school of Buddhism. It was the most sophisticated Japanese school of Buddhism of his time. He had studied and practiced Tendai Buddhism for about 20 years with the most sincere attitude. However, he could not reach the final goal of Buddhism - enlightenment. He was about to give up seeking the way to enlightenment on Mt. Hiei and contemplated leaving the Tendai Buddhist teachings.

Then he had an opportunity to meet with Honen Shonin, a former Tendai monk, who also left Mt. Hiei, and was teaching the Nembutsu path, the Pure Land teachings. In the first meeting, Honen told Shinran, “Recite the Nembutsu and you will reach Nirvana”. Listening to Honen, Shinran finally found the Buddhist teaching that he had been searching for, but did not find on Mt. Hiei.

Before he met Honen, Shinran had followed the teaching of Self-Power. This is an approach when a person, through their own self-effort, can become enlightened through long and difficult Buddhist practices.

With Honen’s revelation of the Nembutsu Path, Shinran gave up the Self-Power methodology, which was a significant change in how he related to the Buddhist teachings. He gave up his Self-Power effort and awakened to the Other-Power teaching. This Other Power teaching is the teaching of Amida Buddha’s Compassion. This compassion tells us everyone possesses Buddha nature. It simply needs to express itself, without our input.

We do not need to do various practices to reach enlightenment. Rather, enlightenment is inherent in all of us, and we, with our self-indulgent ego, needs to get out of our own way. We, hopefully, will come to understand this in our own way, at our own time.

(Saying the Nembutsu, Cont from Pg. 1)

We all have this Buddha nature within us, and can express a sense of deep gratitude by saying “Namo Amida Butsu.” We don’t need to say the Nembutsu as a practice, but rather as an affirmation and a joyous sense of gratitude that all beings can reach enlightenment, since we all possess Buddha nature.

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/TZMLCOGSQTOTGDIRTNNT5EYDBZXK9F2OVZJO](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/91012020000)



WELCOME 2025!!

By: Andrea Chapman, President



New Year's Service Photo by Ed Sams

I hope your new year is off to a strong start and you have many things to look forward to in the coming months. Ekoji ushered in the new year with traditional New Year's Eve and New Year's Day services, including the symbolic ringing of the bell 108 times to rid



2025 New Years Eve Service photo by Ed Sams

ourselves of our 108 defilements afflicting us and all humans. Of course, because it is symbolic, we have the same defilements before and after ringing the bell. But it is a reminder.

EXPERIENCE THE DIVERSITY OF MAHAYANA BUDDHISM: DHARMA EXCHANGE

On Saturday, January 11th, Ekoji hosts a special Dharma Exchange – a unique opportunity to explore the richness of Mahayana Buddhism. This evening event features Dharma talks from esteemed clergy across the Mahayana tradition, including our Pure Land school.

The evening begins at 6:00 PM with a welcome address by Bishop Marvin Harada of the Buddhist Churches of America. Immerse yourself in the beautiful sounds of chanting in Pali, Japanese, Korean, and Tibetan. Renowned teachers Bhante Uparatana, Rev. Harada, Ven. Hyeyoung, Ven. Shingza Rinpoche, and Rev. Bup will each share Dharma messages, followed by a Loving Kindness meditation guided by Ven. Uparatana. The evening concludes with announcements by Prof. Hebbar and closing chants in all four languages.

All are warmly invited to join this immersive experience! The temple opens its doors at 5:30 PM for early arrivals. For those unable to attend in person, the event will be live-streamed via **Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81156252160>

EKOJI SETS GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

The following weekend, January 18, our Board of Directors will convene to review the 2024 Strategic Plan and set ambitious goals for the future. We'll focus on expanding our outreach, strengthening Buddhist education programs, and fostering the growth of our Sangha and extended community. As with any non-profit, fundraising is essential to sustain our programs and facilities. Replenishing our reserves will be a key priority as we explore sustainable fundraising strategies, especially considering the recent building renovations.

(Welcome 2025. Cont. on Pg. 4)

(Welcome 2025, Cont from Pg. 3)

INSPIRING DHARMA TALK BY DR. GEORGE TANABE

Later this month, representatives from BDK America will visit Ekoji. We are honored to have Dr. George Tanabe offer a Dharma message on Sunday, January 26th. Many of you may remember his thought-provoking talk from last year, "Write Your Own Sutra." You can revisit it on our YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/06bX1eVodsU?si=onTURv5QQJcd_IdQ

Stay warm and be well! Temperatures are dipping into the teens here in Virginia.

Namo Amida Butsu



NEW 2025 EKOJI OFFICERS SWORN IN TO OFFICE



On Sunday, January 5, 2025, the 2025 Board of Directors and Trustees were sworn in by Minister's Assistant, Erick Ishii. Pictured left to right in the rear row are: Ed Sams, Trustee; Roger Scott, Member at Large; Michael Huff, Secretary; Nick Karen, Member at Large; Andrea Chapman, President; and Kim Nguyen, Trustee. In the front row are: Maya Horio, Treasurer, and Mahkameh Doroud, Member at Large. Jesse Barrik (incoming member) and Jim Daniels, Member at Large, were unable to attend

Picture by Minister's Assistant Rob Fike

the swearing-in ceremony and will be sworn in by Rev. Rye at their convenience in the near future.

Board member titles and responsibilities may be adjusted at our next meeting. According to the Ekoji Bylaws, the Board must include a President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In some cases, a Vice President or Co-President may be appointed. The remaining members are generally considered "Members at Large." In addition, two Trustees are elected or appointed in alternating years or to complete a term, by the membership at our annual meeting.



EKOJI SNOW POLICY

As we head into the colder weather, please note that Ekoji generally follows Fairfax County public school closures (fcps.edu). For Ekoji, we will try to let everyone know of temple closures via email and social media as soon as closure decisions are made.

Note that the Board has a very high bar for deciding to plow the parking lot, since plowing is extremely costly. If we decide to cancel in-person services, we will try to switch to virtual instead.

For Dharma School classes, we will probably cancel and let the students play in the snow instead.





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**

SATURDAY JANUARY 11 -- BEGINNING AT 6:00 PM: EXPERIENCE THE DIVERSITY OF MAHAYANA BUDDHISM: DHARMA EXCHANGE

The Ekoji Buddhist Temple will provide a unique opportunity to explore the richness of Mahayana Buddhism in featuring Dharma talks from esteemed clergy across the Mahayana tradition, including our own Shin Buddhist tradition.

The evening begins with a welcome address by Bishop Marvin Harada of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). Renowned teachers Bhante Uparatana Rev. Harada, Ven Hyeyong, Ven. Shingza Rinpoche, and Rev. Bup will each share Dharma messages, followed by a Loving Kindness meditation guided by Ven Uparatana.

The temple doors open at 5:30, and it will also be live streamed via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81156252160>

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, GUEST SPEAKER REV. MARVIN HARADA, BISHOP OF THE BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA (BCA)



At Ekoji's hybrid 11:00 Service, the Bishop of the BCA, Rev. Marvin Harada, will provide the Dharma talk. Always inspiring and thought-provoking, Rev. Harada will provide his insights on being a Buddhist in today's world.

Please join us at the 11:00 service.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, EKOJI GUEST SPEAKER, DR. GEORGE TANABE, RETIRED CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIONS, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII



The Ekoji Sangha has been fortunate to have welcomed Dr. Tanabe as a guest speaker before. As a recognized Buddhist scholar, Dr Tanabe is fascinating to listen to in his willingness to "push the edges of envelope" in working on new and imaginative ways to share Jodo Shin Buddhism with the rest of the world -- even to the point of encouraging others to write their own sutras in touching out spirituality.

Please join us at Ekoji's hybrid 11:00 service on Sunday, Jan. 26.

RUN, DON'T WALK To The SHIN PATH!



Have you been searching for meaning, purpose and happiness in your life? Did you realize that you have discovered the most practiced form of Buddhism that originated in Japan over 850 years ago? If you're new to the Shin Path, have you ever wondered---what are they doing? Or why are they doing that? Or how are they doing what they're doing?

If you have some basic questions about HOW to live your life as a Shin Buddhist, RUN to this seminar!

While we won't be able to answer all questions or inquiries in the time allocated for the seminar, hopefully, we'll be able to offer you practical information about the practice, history, culture and how to live as a Shin Buddhist in the 21st century.

You'll be "running" through this seminar with Rev. Kodo Umezu, retired Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, and Rev. Brian Nagata, Education Director for BDK America, Ekoji's benefactor.

If you have any simple questions about the practice and your life as a Shin Buddhist, please submit your questions to: Run2Ekoji@gmail.com by January 31, 2025 and we'll try to respond to your questions during the seminar.

We'll see you on Saturday, February 8, 2025 from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM at the Ekoji Buddhist Temple, 6500 Lakehaven Lane, Fairfax Station, VA 22039.



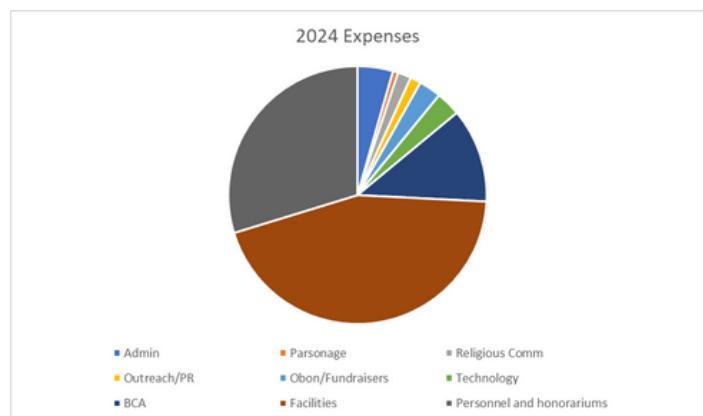
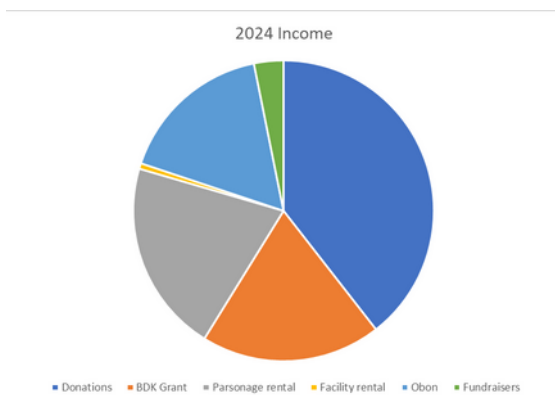
DECEMBER TREASURER’S REPORT

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.

2024 Finance Flows and 2025 Look-ahead: Sangha donations and our end-of-year solicitation fundraiser brought in around \$12,000 for December, allowing us to end the year with a deficit of around \$2500. We head into 2025 with some optimism for a balanced budget next year. We secured a new occupant for our parsonage rental, and the Board is discussing updating our facility rental policies now that the kitchen renovation is complete, which will renew another potential income stream. We are still awaiting a response on our grant request to the BCA Dharma Forward Campaign’s Technology Fund, but we learned that we were approved for our request to the Fairfax County Police Department for security upgrade funds in the amount of about \$7,000 (funded by the VA Department of Criminal Justice Services). We will use these funds for a new sign at our driveway entrance and for additional security cameras. Our new facility maintenance contractor, Mr. Muhamett, has also been hard at work, identifying and addressing facility plumbing and HVAC repairs. We are hopeful that, with his help, we will be able to start preventing the more expensive emergency repairs that we have experienced in recent years.

- **Income (\$155,517):** While our sangha donations this year were short of our \$65,000 target, they did continue to make up the largest chunk of our annual income. Our BDK grant, parsonage rental, and Obon comprised roughly equal chunks of our next largest income streams.
- **Expenses (\$158,094):** Facility costs—including monthly utilities, landscaping, HVAC repairs, and emergency hondo walkway repairs—made up almost half of our annual expenses for 2024. Personnel and honorarium costs made up just over a quarter of our expenses, with BCA dues and travel expenses comprising the next largest chunk.





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		

EDITOR'S KIBITZING

“AGING AND THE SUTRA ON LOVING KINDNESS”

By Ken Nakamura, Editor

Nori and I were in Japan over the recent holiday season. We met up with the rest of the family a bit later at Shohoji Temple in Kumamoto, Japan. This temple has been in the Akahoshi family for more than 400 years. But for the 1st few days in Japan, Nori and I were traveling by ourselves.

Ken had wanted to see Deshima Island in Nagasaki Bay. Deshima, a man-made island in the shape of a fan and became, in 1636, the only recognized port of entry in Japan, allowed by the government, to conduct trade with the west. If you saw the made-for-TV Blockbuster, Shogun, it was from Deshima that served as a point of operation for the Portuguese Jesuit priests to work to spread Catholicism, influence the military government, and conduct trade in Asia with the Portuguese “Black Ships” carrying on the trade.

After a fascinating tour of Deshima Island, we took a four-hour bus ride from Nagasaki to Kumamoto to meet up with the rest of the family. Normally we'd fly or take a fast train from one point to another. But you can see a lot by going slower.



As I was looking out the window and passing several small farming village and several small towns, Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi's Dharma talk about her aunt, Mitsue, came to mind.

Rev. Motoyoshi described her aunt as a strong, independent woman with a good education and a good job who had a good retired life in a

small rural town. She did not have any relatives or close friends near her, but she didn't mind as long as she was surrounded by her beloved flower and trees.

When Rev. Motoyoshi last talked to her, her aunt was sad. Her once vibrant aunt lamented that she no longer had a dream. Rev. Motoyoshi, in listening to her aunt's voice, wondered if her aunt felt hopeless, frustrated, and empty. She asked herself "is this how my aunt felt? Is this what old age does to a person? Does no longer having a dream because of old age mean no hope, no direction, no joy?" Rev. Motoyoshi's aunt, in the end, lived alone, and died alone.

As we rode by these small towns and neighborhoods, I wondered if there were others in these towns like Rev. Motoyoshi's aunt. Marriage and birth rates are going down in Japan, and more women are choosing careers outside of the home. The multi-generational family, while still not a myth, is becoming more real as Japan continues to urbanize. Like Rev. Motoyoshi's aunt, Mitsuye, can that lead to more of a sense of depression, loneliness and despair?

([Aging and Loving Kindness](#). Cont on Pg. 12)

Son Greg showed me real estate ads of nice houses for sale in Japan. Often they looked like houses that would fit into those small neighborhoods that we were passing. It was explained to me that it could be houses where the owner had passed and the kids, if there were any, didn't want to come back to their former lives, and so the property would be sold or abandoned.

I wonder how much of that is happening in the United States. I know of two houses near Seabrook, N.J. where I grew up. One of the houses went on the market for a long time and was finally sold. It was starting to show its age when someone bought it. The other house was never bought, and eventually condemned and torn down.

Nori and I are of that age where we get a lot of ads to sell our house and buy into a senior living community. Some of their main selling points are that you won't have to worry about household problems such as changing light bulbs, plumbing issues, or shoveling snow, etc., and instead build new, active communities with new friends, and with many planned or self-organized activities.

There may be many people who could fit the description of Rev. Motoyoshi's aunt. There are senior citizen communities going up everywhere in our area, trying to meet the demands of an aging population. I've very seldom noticed or fully recognized this happening, or even truly thought about what it could mean on a broader scale in terms of aging for us.

These senior communities are very nice, but very expensive. For those who can afford it, there is one possibility for a certain life style. However, for those who can't, then what?

As I rode that bus, I also thought of a sutra that was given to me by retired Rev. William Masuda, then of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple. This is their version of the Loving Kindness Sutra.

SUTRA ON LOVING KINDNESS

(Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Version)

(Please read down)

May all beings be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May my friends be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May I be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to me,
May I live in peace and harmony.

May strangers be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May my family be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May my enemies be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May my teachers be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.

May all beings be happy and well,
May no harm or difficulties come to them,
May they live in peace and harmony.



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 Joren 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 hear the Dharma through the movie and the discussion, regardless of whether it was on topic.

The movie for January 2005 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. The Film 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 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.wildapricor.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 2025 the years for Special Family Memorial Services are: 2024 – 1st Year; 2023 – 3rd Year; 2017 – 7th Year; 2011 – 13th Year; 2007 – 17th Year; 1999 – 25th Year; 1991 – 33rd Year; 1974 – 50th Year; 1924 – 100th.

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

DECEMBER 2024

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

JANUARY 2025

Evelyn Kitahara
4/22/1918 - 1/12/2001
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

FEBRUARY 2025

Lillian Oie
1/25/1940 – 2/1/1998
Fred Okamoto
3/21/2000
Rev. Kenryu Takashi Tsuji
3/1/1920 – 2/26/2004
Yone June Honda
4/8/2014
Kenichi Kuwabara
2/5/1925 – 2/23/2015
Hisao "Mat" Matsumoto
2/11/2018



In Gassho

Dana from November 26, 2024 to December 31,, 2024

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Joy Aso | Hideo Hashimoto | Lisa and Greg Nakamura |
| John Barnes | Melanie Hatter | Kim Nguyen and Hung Vo |
| Gordan Bermant | Marisa and Tamon Honda | Aileen and Lawrence Parmeter |
| Jane Blechman | Maya and Brant Horio | Lani Pham and Pierre Karen |
| Gerard Boudriault | Emily Ihara | Jerry Rankin |
| Tasha and Thomas Brickhouse | Cheryl Kameda | Edward Sams |
| Jessica Brooks | Yuko Keicho | Roger Scott |
| Eugenia Burkes | Norman and Gail Kondo | Frank Swithers |
| Loredana Calin | Timothy Liu | Anna Tecson |
| Joseph Crilley | Keith Lowe | Joanna and Mike Therway |
| Margaret Cummisky | Sandra Lukic-Dapoingy | Pilar Uelman |
| Mahkameh Doroud | Thea Maggard | Ngoc-Yen Vu |
| Matthew Doubrava | Richard Malone and Rick Ware | Andrea Walter |
| StanleyFujii | Arlene and Wayne Minami | Alixis Yamshita |
| Joseph Gotchy | Bert and Nancy Motonaga | Mikio Yamashita |
| Rahman Gunawan | Ken and Nori Nakamura | Seo Yatsushiro |



Check out Ekoji’s monthly podcast interviews at <http://tinyuri.com/EchoEkoji>
 This Month Andrea and Joe are joined by Ekoji’s own **Rev. Kurt Rye**

SANGHA SCOOPS

By Ken Nakamura

Ekaji President, **Andrea Chapman and her family** took a well-earned vacation over the Holiday Season to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. We understand that the General Orders for the trip were that this was going to be “family time” and that work related texting, emails, calls, report writing, non-family future planning, etc., were *verboten*. Living in the Washington environment, we’ll have to see how long that rule held.

Dr. Kara Ishida and the kids, Logan (11) and Aurora (8.5) came from California to visit **Grandpa Bert and Grandma Nancy Motonaga** for the holidays. Nancy had health issues a while back, and it's great to hear that she is up and about for the festivities. Kara's kids also played with their cousins, Isa and Mariam, Neil and Farrah's children. All to make the holidays merrier – noisier but merrier.

Norm and Gail Kondo went to the Los Angeles area to also spend the holidays with the West Coast branch of the family tree. **Lauren, Emi, and George** followed Norm and Gail to make the Kondo family time complete. They hope to connect with **Ron Nagatani**, another member of Ekaji's diaspora.

Nori and Ken Nakamura and families spent the holiday in Japan. The main reason was for the grandchildren to visit Shohoji, and learn about the temple, which has been and still is a part of the Akahoshi family for over 400 years. We arrived in Japan at different times due to various schedules, so Nori and I went to Kyoto, and then to Nagasaki to see the historic Deshima island, the only government allowed port of trade with the west until the United States forced Japan's door open for trade.



Eventually, we all met in Kumamoto and went to Shohoji together on December 24. The family learned how to clean the items on the Onaijin, and then had a family service in



the Hondo. We then had a service in the temple's Columbarium with Connor, Nami, and Siena leading everyone in the chanting of the Juseige. Over 800 Akahoshis are in the Columbarium, and we hope that someday, in remembering this day, the kids will appreciate the many causes and conditions involved in getting us to this point over those many generations,



Greg, Lisa, and Siena completed their Japan trip by going to Kyoto's Otani Hombyo temple to pay their respects to Greg's grandparents and other relatives. Then they went on to stay with Lisa's mother in Yamanashi where you can see Mt. Fuji from her house. They were also able to ride horses a couple of houses away. Most relieved was Siena since Santa found her even in Japan.

Brant, Maya, Connor, and Nami, were reminded that no matter how carefully one plans things, all things are impermanent. The plan, after Kumamoto, was to go to Hiroshima. At school, Nami had read a book on Hiroshima and the bombing. After carefully preparing her, we went to the Peace Park and the Museum. After Hiroshima, the plan was to go on to Himeji, Osaka, then Tokyo and home. But life stepped in. After Shohoji, Nami and Connor sequentially got sick and needed several days of rest. Everything else got scrapped except the Shinkansen, Japan's Bullet Train, to Tokyo and home. While not the lessons that were hoped for, this experience had its own Dharma lessons.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS, JANUARY 2025

WEEKLY

SUNDAY

- CHILDREN'S DHARMA SCHOOL, 9:30AM – 10:30AM, EVERY SUNDAY 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, 7:00PM IN THE EKOJI ZOOM ROOM.

THURSDAY

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

MONTHLY

FIRST SUNDAY

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

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

- GATHERING OF THE THREE YANAS" – SPECIAL BUDDHIST SEMINAR HOSTED BY BISHOP MARVIN HARADA, 6:00PM ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 11 IN THE HONDO.
- HYBRID SUNDAY SERVICE WITH DHARMA MESSAGE GIVEN BY BISHOP HARADA, SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 AT 11:00 IN THE HONDO.
- YOUNG BUDDHISTS ASSOCIATION MEETING, SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 IN THE SANGHA HALL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE HYBRID SUNDAY SERVICE.
- HYBRID SUNDAY SERVICE WITH DHARMA MESSAGE GIVEN BY DR. GEORGE TANABE, SUNDAY, JANUARY 26 AT 11:00 IN THE HONDO.

BUDDHIST MOVIE GROUP DISCUSSION, "200 METERS," SUNDAY, JANUARY 19 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.



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