



New Stupa for Rev. Master Jiyu

December 2004 / January & February 2005

Eugene Buddhist Priory

Pdf calendars will be available soon on the members webpage.

Links: <http://www.eugenebuddhistpriory.org/EBPmembers/EBPmembers.htm>

or

<http://www.eugenebuddhistpriory.org/EBPmembers/EBPnewsletter.htm> .

Printed copies of calendars are also available at the temple; we're happy to mail you a copy if you do not have access to a printer.

Dharma Offering:

In our Thanksgiving Ceremony & Founder's Day Memorial liturgy, I noticed the emphasis made in both the two hymns and *The Scripture on the Immeasurable Life of the Tathagata* that our training is not characterized entirely by "love and light". There are dark times while the seed of Buddhahood germinates within the earth (our body-mind), there are long, slow times of growth, there are days of weary toil, there are times when we cannot see the Buddha , there are difficult and fiery

times as when the kalpa ends. But these teachings also point out that the Buddha is actually always present and that our training in the Dharma does yield fruit. "In darkness there is light," says the morning office scripture *Sandokai*.

Buddhists do not impose a particular view on life or reality. We endeavor to see clearly what is there. There is no judgment of what we see. This earth, this life, this universe are neither good nor bad. They simply exist, they simply are. Our great ancestor Nagarjuna expressed succinctly that this dark and painful world of samsara--this endless round of births and deaths--is not to be viewed as bad or something to escape from, but rather is nirvana, our wonderful opportunity to practice the Buddha's Way and compassionately assist all beings do the same. "Form is pure [empty of defilements and attempts to categorize--immaculate]," says the *Scripture of Great Wisdom*, "the same is also true of all sensation, thought, activity, and consciousness" [the five aggregates of human existence]. "Light goes with darkness, as the sequence does of steps in walking," continues *Sandokai*.

As Americans we tend to be very idealistic. We have an idea of how the world should be. We want and desire a particular state of affairs, we have definite ideas and plans about the way we want life to be. And if it's not that way, we are unhappy, we feel oppressed, we feel deprived of what we feel is rightfully ours. This is a form of dukkha, the Buddhist word for suffering, dissatisfaction, stress. Coupled with that ideal-ism is the dual-ism of good and evil from the Western religious traditions that underlie our culture--that this world is evil or bad, unclean, apart from God--and that an ideal "good" exists. And so we judge all things by this standard. We then march forth to fix the world, to make it over in a particular way, justifying what we do, sadly often, in the name of religion.

The practice of Buddhist meditation undermines both these ism's in that it teaches us to see, or observe, and consider without discrimination or judgment. Again from *Sandokai*, "do not set up your own standards," and "with the ideal comes the actual." The world simply exists; what is actually there has nothing to do with an ideal or an idea. And in that actual existence, beyond the opposites, is a pure which defies intellectual comprehension or categorization. The world, this life, this universe simply ARE. And all humanity can know this in our hearts. Our individual Buddha Nature, our hearts, are part of this pure, and we can live from this place, guided and directed by it. In so doing we naturally make the world a better place. Betterment comes from within, without idealism or judgmentalism, both dualities which pit us against the external world and/or other people. We don't have to create or impose peace or justice on externals and others, or even on our own minds. I am not saying that ideas and ideals are not useful. Used rightly, they can serve as peg boards upon which to hang our efforts (our tools) in working with others. But the direction comes from within, from this pure that is beyond pure and impure, and we endeavor to always

remain flexible. Great Master Dogen, the principal founder of Soto Zen in Japan, when asked what was the most valuable teaching he brought back from China, answered, "a soft and flexible mind."

That flexibility, that openness to new and different experience and the willingness to adapt to such, is the primary characteristic of this existence-time-flow which is the universe itself--and the true reality and life of each of us. But don't expect to win awards or recognition or praise from simply following the heart, the Buddha Mind. This kind of practice does not draw attention to itself or attract those enmeshed in or seeking after pleasure and the endless array of distracting pursuits. This practice is ordinary, everyday life, right here between our hands and eyes and ears. "Such unpretentious work all foolish seem and dull, But those who practice thus this law shall be called Lord of Lords for eternity," ends *The Most Excellent Mirror-Samadhi*, another morning office teaching. This is our assurance that this seeming ordinary practice of mindfulness and continually letting go--of everything that beclouds the mind and heart--will lead us to a full knowledge of Buddha and a peace no one can take away from us, no matter what the circumstances. What more do we want?

Rev.

Oswin

Usual Weekly Schedule:

Mondays - Closed except for emergencies.

Tuesdays - Open at 2 pm. 7:45-8:30 pm Meditation and Evening Office

Wednesdays - 7:00-9:00 pm Service, Meditation, Dharma talk, and Evening Office

Thursdays - 7:45-8:30 pm Meditation and Evening Office

Fridays - 7:45-8:30 pm Meditation and Evening Office

Saturdays - 9:30 am Meditation, 10:00 am Short Morning Service or other service

Sundays - 9:30 am Meditation, 10:15 am Ceremony or other activity, followed by Dharma talk and tea. The Priory is closed after 2 pm.

Note: Early meditation and morning service Tuesday through Friday usually begin at 6 am; on Sunday, usually at 6:30 am. Please call the evening before to verify the time.

Winter Events of Note (December-February)

Orientations - Saturdays, December 4, January 8, February 5.

Retreats - Wednesday December 29 6:30 am to 8:30 pm. Come for any part of the day.

Dharma School for Children - Saturday, December 18 at 3:00 pm (tentative); February (TBA)

Enlightenment Day Ceremony & Sangha Potluck - Sunday, December 19

Other Ceremonies (Sundays unless noted differently) - Avatamsaka Scripture, December 12; Readings & Songs on the Buddha's Enlightenment, Wednesday,

December 15; **New Year's Eve**, Friday, December 31; **Maitreya Bodhisattva**, January 2; **Buddha's Renunciation**, February 6; **Buddha's Parinirvana**, February 13.

Temple Closed - Friday, December 24 through Monday, December 27; Sunday, January 16 through Saturday, January 29. Reopens Sunday, January 30.

Prior Away - November 24 through December 10 for Rohatsu winter monastic retreat at Shasta Abbey; Monday, January 3 through Monday, January 17 (temple closed except for activities noted on calendar); **Note: Priory closed January 16-29.**



News of the past two months

The Festival of Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts (Segaki), was the one of the most well-attended festivals of the year. This year's ceremony had particular significance for many. Some members had lost close friends and loved ones, and the many deaths caused by the tragic events taking place in the world today were on many people's minds. All of these were included in the transfer of merit, which was read silently by two members during the circumambulation and incense offering. A poignant Dharma talk followed the festival focusing on the broader meaning of "hungry ghosts". The Burning of Paper Tombstones, paper memorial tablets inscribed with the names of people who have died, particularly those who met untimely deaths where fear and confusion may have been present, were burned over an outside bonfire on the following Wednesday night.

Thanks go to everyone who attended this heart-felt ceremony and made offerings of merit, as well as to all those who helped prepare the elaborate Hungry Ghosts altar with varied and delightful offerings of tasty foods. Every year more people participate in the preparation and performance of the ceremony. Both activities widen the transfer of merit and remind everyone to consider the brevity of life, the sorrowful nature of samsara, and the wonderful Buddhist Dharma which can prove so helpful to beings in need. Particular thanks goes to Rev. Master Oswin for the several Dharma talks leading up to, and including the day of, Segaki, which facilitated a continued unfolding of understanding of this dramatic ceremony for those who attended.

The next weekend four members and Rev. Master Oswin traveled down to Shasta Abbey to attend the annual memorial for Rev. Master Jiyu, who died eight years ago on November 6. It was a lovely fall week end. The Abbey was relatively quiet and there was a skiff of snow on the ground. The routine of the monastery was easy to slip into--rising early to meditate, lots of quiet working meditation, and the usual meals prepared with great care. We ate most meals in the Vimalakirti Hall with the long-term lay residents. The monks had been encouraged to talk about Rev. Master Jiyu and her teachings on this special weekend. Those of us from Eugene went out to her stupa one evening at dusk and Rev. Master Oswin gave details about the location and form of the stupa, including the symbolism, the poems engraved in the stupa, and Rev. Master Jiyu's strength and dedication embodied in the monument.

During the memorial ceremony for Rev. Master Jiyu on Sunday in the Buddha Hall, two large photos hung on pillars adjacent to the altar. One was a young version of Rev. Master with a sweet smile, and the other was years later with a jovial laugh and her hands in gassho. We sang several beautiful scriptures and hymns, then processed to the stupa site for another ceremony. As usual, a number of people from the local area attended. The intimacy of the weekend brought us closer to all the people who share our practice. Rev. Master Eko and the community were delighted to have us spend this time together with them at the monastery, and we are very grateful to them for providing such a kind and thoughtful remembrance of Rev. Master Jiyu, for extending their hospitality during our visit, and for offering the priceless refuge of the Dharma they always do. On the way home we stopped in Myrtle Point for ice cream cones, and all agreed that going down for this occasion every year with a group from the Priory would be a good thing to do.

The retreat on November 13 & 14 concluded with a Memorial for Veterans Day, offering merit to all those who have been killed in wars. Rev. Master Oswin talked afterwards about a "hell scroll" from Japan, in particular its parallels to some of the drawings in Rev. Master Jiyu's book, *How to Grow a Lotus Blossom*. A tape of the talk is available in the lending library.

On Saturday, November 20, several Priory members gathered with Peter Walker's family to offer a memorial to his father, Ernest Paul Walker, who died on September 27 of leukemia-related illness at the age of 63. Paul had been a meditator most of his life, and had been keenly interested in Buddhism. He had been an artist by vocation and was known to be one of the most generous persons anyone had ever met. In keeping with that, scriptures offered included "Awakening to the Mind of the Bodhisattva" from *Shushogi*, in which Great

Master Dogen teaches that charity, or generosity, is one of the signs of enlightenment. We also sang “Lord of Healing, Lord of Light” while everyone offered incense, and then concluded with *Adoration of the Buddha’s Relics*. The altar was decorated with a self-portrait, a memorial tablet, cremated remains in a simple, elegant wooden box, food offerings, and several photographs of Paul and his grandchildren Emily and Patrick. After the ceremony, which touched everyone deeply, the family lingered at the altar to reminisce about Paul and then joined everyone else in the library for gingerbread cake and tea. We extend our condolences to Peter and Sarah and their family and wish Paul the very best on the next leg of his journey.

The next day, Sunday, November 21, the temple celebrated our Thanksgiving Service together with our Founder’s Day Memorial for Rev. Master Jiyu. Afterwards, Rev. Master Oswin talked a bit about stupas, their spiritual meaning, and their historical development, then placed photographs and other objects related to Rev. Master Jiyu in a fire-proof box. The Dharma school children had previously colored printed drawings of stupas to include, as well as had wrapped all the objects in plastic bags for safekeeping. We processed informally to the paved stupa site and placed the relics box in a cavity in the center of the site. A six-foot concrete Japanese pagoda-style stupa purchased locally was erected above the cavity, and everyone recited the *Adoration of the Buddha’s Relics*. The stupa provides a focus for the central garden and other buildings, and gives the whole area a sense of being a place of spiritual practice, a temple! The site lends itself nicely to sitting and walking meditation, small ceremonies, and quiet reflection. Thanks to all who helped with the various summer projects which culminated in the erection of the stupa. After collecting additional items over the next year, we will enclose them in the relics box and formally dedicate the stupa next Founder’s Day in November.

Note from the Prior:

Dear Friends,

This will be the last e-newsletter until sometime in February. I will be attending the winter monastic retreat at Shasta Abbey, returning December 10, and then either away or renewing here during January. Please contact a lay minister during these times if you have an emergency. Also, I encourage you to work on your lay sangha connections while I am away. As I mentioned in a previous email, I am not doing anyone a favor if I allow you to become dependent on myself. In a meditation tradition like ours, each person is responsible for their own training. We can help and support each other in the practice--and in practical ways, too--but each of us alone keeps up the commitment and effort to train. Even the Buddha could only point the way. He taught his disciples to make His teaching the light of their lives. It's good advice for us, and we can do it. Participating in temple activities is an often underestimated way of helping all

beings, in particular your fellow sangha members. Simply your presence at the temple is a wonderful and valuable offering. And perhaps without needing to say it, your daily regular meditation is essential and is the foundation of everything else. You won't find the peace we talk about unless you do the practice.

Thank you for all your help, support, and work this past year--all the many offerings that make the temple possible. Completing our land loan payments is a reason for congratulations and gladness, and I am particularly pleased with how the stupa site and central area has unfolded. (See news item below.) Thanks, too, for all the help you gave in splitting and stacking firewood. The new woodstove works well and makes the library quite cozy for visitors. Because most of the wood comes from our own property, using it for heating connects us to the land and surrounding forest in a vital and meaningful way. And "stacking wood and carrying water" are traditional forms of working meditation in the Zen schools--and not without reason. These simple activities help quiet down mental chatter and settle our turbulent emotions. Learning to be still in the midst of these activities while performing useful service to others is another key way we harmonize body, mind, and heart.

May you and all those you love be well and content in the new year.

Yours in the Dharma, *Rev. Oswin*

Notes

Drivers Still Needed.

If you can occasionally give a ride to someone, please let Rev. Master Oswin know, as some of our members need transportation to the temple at times.

Third Refuge Assistance Coordinators

November: Angela Martinek, 484-1799; December: Wendy Schwall, 484-1262; January: Marta Hubbard, 686-2046. If you're a sangha member and need assistance due to illness or other pressing circumstances, contact the coordinator for that month to see who has offered to help in those particular ways. The sangha is one of the Three Treasures and is worthy of our offerings, time, and care.

Dharma Offerings

With the kind help of several members, we are taping, transcribing, editing, and printing copies of Dharma talks given at the temple. Also available are articles from back issues of the newsletters and articles that have been posted online at the website.

Click here for Stones for Jizo children's story:

http://www.eugenebuddhistpriory.org/Stones_for_Jizo.pdf . Another article, "Justice and the Five Laws of the Universe," will be posted as well soon. This is an edited and expanded version of a talk Rev. Master Oswin gave at an interfaith service on September 11 remembering those who died on that day three years ago.

Future of Newsletter

We plan to revive our printed version of the newsletter after the new year. If you want to receive it via post, please send or confirm your address with us. A pdf version for printing out will be posted on the website. and we will retain our e-list in order to notify you when it is posted. If you do not wish to receive email from the Priory, please let us know.

Dharma Study in the New Year

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In the new year we will focus our Dharma talks on basic Buddhist teachings and our ceremonies on events in the life of the Buddha. Recommended reading includes the first two chapters of *Zen is Eternal Life*, Rev. Master Jiyu's *Roar of the Tigress*, Volume 1, and Great Master Dogen's *Shushogi*, found in both *Zen is Eternal Life* and the booklet *An Introduction to the Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition*.

Shasta Abbey cookbook available

Cooking with a Gentle Heart features almost 400 vegetarian recipes, two hundred of which come directly from the kitchen of Shasta Abbey. Copies are available at the Priory (cost \$22), or you may order directly from Shasta Abbey Buddhist Supplies (supplies@BuddhistSupplies.com). All proceeds go to help the Abbey finance the recent construction of the Bodhidharma Hall, a residence for monks. Help the monastery repay the loan they took out to complete the building. As of last report, they are within \$20,000 of the completion of the financing.

Respectful Dress at the Priory

In keeping with our intent to restrain the senses and cultivate a pure heart, please wear clothing at the temple that is both comfortable for meditation and at the same time respectful, neat, and modest. Body and mind being one, how we treat and regard our physical form can have a significant impact on our spiritual practice. Inappropriate dress includes shorts, jeans, tight-fitting or low-cut clothing, T-shirts with loud slogans, and highly-scented lotions and perfumes.



Alms Bowl

Alms & Offerings Received. We are very grateful to all who have made offerings in the past month. All offerings--large or small, material or spiritual, tangible or in service--enable the temple to exist as a place of teaching and refuge for those who wish to practice in the Serene Reflection tradition transmitted by Rev. Master Jiyu. Our support of the Priory is an important way we show our gratitude for all that she gave us.

Alms Bowl Requests. Kind offerings to the temple would be: polyester-fill pillows, clumping cat litter, woodstove implements (we still need a shovel, broom, & tongs), and a carpet sweeper. Used implements and sweeper would be fine.

May our donors of the Four Supports,
food, lodging, medicine, clothing,
be free from enmity and danger;
be free from mental suffering;
be free from physical suffering.
May they take care of themselves happily.
May whatever they have gained not be lost.

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Credits & Feedback: Thanks go to Sally Meadow, Pamela Wright, Mike Running, and Jerry Mohr for their help with this calendar and news. Thanks go to Jerry as well for maintaining the Priory public and members website

We welcome contributions of articles or questions about meditation and Buddhist practice, as well as artwork, graphics, and digital photographs with a Buddhist theme.

If you do not wish to continue receiving email from the Priory, please type "Remove" in the subject line and return this email.

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