

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 502

DECEMBER 2020

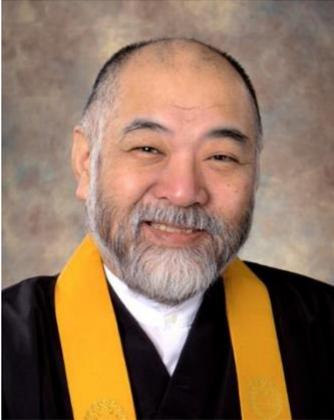
DECEMBER

Please be advised that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the following church activities for the Fowler Buddhist Church have been cancelled:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| December 6 | Bodhi Day and December Shotsuki Memorial Service |
| December 13 | FBWA Year-End Bonenkai Service and Luncheon |
| December 31 | New Year's Eve Service (Joya-E) |

We appreciate your patience and understanding.
We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



A New, but the Original Dharma Wheel

What truth/reality did Śākyamuni Buddha experience under the Bodhi tree? Actually, what he realized there often shocks the believers of other religions. After his enlightenment, we do not need to set up an idea of eternal being outside and unchanging soul inside anymore, that because these delusional ideas really messes us up.

Buddhism describes Buddha's enlightenment by the concept of "dependent origination". In short, dependent origination means "all existence consists of interdependence".

"Dependent origination" is based on the idea of "relation generates existence", which is opposite of the traditional Western notion of "existence is what generates relation".

Modern Buddhism blew apart the idea that "relation is generated from existence" which is the hypothesis of Judaism, Christianity, Muslim, Taoism, Confucianism, Brahmanism etc.

Relevance of Buddha's idea was validated later by modern mathematics and physics in 20 and 21st century. It's because modern mathematics, physics and philosophy validate "no determinacy of existence" after success of incompleteness theorem in mathematics or after the success of quantum physics in the world of physics.

Modern science already proved that Buddha is correct.

Recently, an original Dharma Wheel of Buddhism known as the 'Aśōka Chakra'



was to be used as the official Logo in the Buddhist world after the long absence. We at BCA are, of course, no exception.

The so-called Eight-fold Dharma Wheel the crest of the oldest monastery in Sri Lanka



which we have been using for many years as a substitute Dharma Wheel, because 'Aśōka Chakra' the original Dharma Wheel became not be able to used 200 years ago.

For many years, 'Aśōka Chakra' used by the Buddhist group was not permitted by the



Indian Government because it has been a part of the National Flag  as



well as the National Emblem . But in recent years Buddhism awakened from more than 1000 years sleep in India and Buddhists population increased dramatically. Some survey resulted more than 50 million people officially declared Buddhist and numbers is still acutely growing. It was the reason why they could request to the Indian Government to using 'Aśōka Chakra' as Buddhist symbol. Their request was finally accepted in 2007.

The design of 'Aśōka Chakra' consists of 24 Wheel spokes and a circle of center.



The center circle represents our individual, and the 24 wheel spokes surrounding it represents all of the temporal and spatial conditions surrounding the existence. According to the Indian civilization, the number "24" symbolically means "All".

Without exception, we were born from parents who as an evolved mankind from "original life-form" born to the earth 3.6 billion years ago. And we have each different individual now after received the conditions of education and the environment. From the edge of the universe to the earth of this planet, there is a chain of interdependency beyond imagination. Even when you look inward, you can understand that you exist by an interdependency of 60 trillion cells. If even one of these boundless conditions is lacking, the result is that we do not have our identity right now. In other words, it is 'Aśōka Chakra' that expresses each individual existence living by being supported by countless other powers other than oneself (Interdependency).

When thinking like this, the circle of the center supposed to be me, but in reality there may be the boundless and myriad dependent originations in existence, which we call 'Kuh = Void-ness as dependent origination'.

The well-known "Circle of Life" by the Lion King movie is the meaning of "Wheel of Life" originally, which is based on the Truth of Interdependency symbolized by this 'Aśōka Chakra'.

In closing, I want to share a following poem that one Buddhist poet wrote:

A Bell, A Bird and Me (English Translation)

Even if I spread out both hands,
I cannot fly at all in the sky,
But the bird that can fly
Cannot run fast on the ground like me.

Even if I shake my body,
It doesn't make beautiful sounds,
But the ringing bell
Doesn't know as many songs as me.

A bell, a bird and me,
Everyone is different, everyone is good.

Gassho,
Rev. Kakei Nakagawa, Rinban



Good news! The teaching of Impermanence reminds us that things will not continue forever!

Hello, all Central California Sangha friends! We only have one month till 2021! Time swifts by so quickly! Under the guidelines of the County Health Department, we are still not able to have temple/church gatherings in the Hondo and social hall buildings. Rinban and I discussed how we can conduct a New Year's Eve Service (traditionally called "Joya-e"), and we decided to have a short outdoor service. Jo means "reset", "wipe out" or "clean up." "Ya" means "night." "e" means "gathering." So, Joya-e means "let us try to refresh our minds on New Year's Eve, and prepare to welcome the New Year with a fresh mind", or simply we can say Joya-e is a night gathering for reflection. The current schedule is 2pm at Parlier, 3pm at Kingsburg, 4pm at Visalia, and 6pm at Fresno. Reedley will have a guest speaker for their Eve Service. Fowler and Hanford continue to suspend their church activities. We will chant Juseige together (socially distanced & outdoor) in front of the Kansho (big bell) and all participants are welcome to gong the bell to welcome the New year. The service will be about 15 minutes. I look forward to seeing you.

As I mentioned in my last article, for the last two months, I proposed at Central Cal Temple/Church board meetings the idea of hosting a Drive-Thru Food fundraiser to benefit their temples. Both Reedley Buddhist Church and Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple raised their hands to host fundraisers. I don't know how to make traditional Japanese food, but I am familiar with contemporary Japanese food which I cook and serve for my family. I decided to produce Yakisoba at Reedley in October, and Curry at Fresno in November. Under the pandemic condition, I assumed I had to make these foods by myself without help, and I limited myself to serve up to 250 plates. But my assumption was wrong!

At Reedley, many Sangha members generously helped my fundraiser project and added more food to the Yakisoba Bento Box. You can view pictures of these "Deluxe" Bento Boxes on Twitter! I was supposed to cook Yakisoba by myself, but two great chefs

came to help and cooked all the Yakisoba. Reedley closed their Church right after their famous Crab Dinner on March 14 and the Yakisoba fundraiser was their biggest event since. All of the helpers were socially distanced and enjoyed talks with “long time no see” friends at their home church. After all Bento Boxes were filled with Yakisoba and side dishes, I walked to a popup tent where the Reedley president greeted those who came to pick up their order. Many people were pleased to see each other while picking up their meal. I sincerely appreciate the Reedley Sangha members help for the fundraiser and I was glad to see everyone.

At Fresno, Sangha members planned the monthly food fundraiser, and my “deluxe” Curry Bento Box fundraiser was set as their kick-off event. With the current pandemic and the guidelines from the Health Department changing frequently, please stay tuned for the next food fundraiser! For the Curry, I acted as “Master Chef”, and a Sangha member kindly made a chef’s hat (white starched hat). You can watch on Twitter, how I cooked curry (7 hours a day) in the Fresno Betsuin kitchen. Before the pandemic, “Fresno Betsuin – Strength in Sangha” T-shirts were produced and were worn by all volunteers during this event. During the curry cooking, I really sensed that kindness and willingness of the Sangha. I think what I sensed was “Strength in Sangha”.

In both Reedley and Fresno, I was so grateful to work with such wonderful people!

One of the universal truths of the Buddha is the teaching of Impermanence. At the New Year’s Eve Service, I always remind everyone that what happened in the current year does not always reflect what is going to happen in the coming year. I assume the pandemic condition will continue in 2021, but all things that began in the past will end in the future. We need to be careful, but not scared. When we gong the bell at the New Year’s Eve Service, we reset our mind to welcome the new year with fresh minds. As long as we walk on the path of Buddhahood, we can continue enjoying our life with gratitude under any circumstance.

Gassho

**VIRTUAL BODHI DAY AND
DECEMBER SHOTSUKI
MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Dec 6 - CC Combined Shotsuki
Service from Parlier

Dec 13 - CC Combined Bodhi
Day service from Visalia

Dec 20 - CC Combined Sunday
Dharma service from
Kingsburg

Dec 27 - CC Combined Nirvana
Day Service from Fowler

Jan 1 - CC Combined New
Year's Morning Service from
Fresno

If you have any questions or need
assistance, please call the Betsuin
office Monday-Friday, (559) 442-
4054 or Reverend Kaz (424) 666-
7101.

**IN-PERSON/
OUTDOOR/SOCIALLY \$**

Dec 31 @ 2pm - New Year's
Eve Service in Parlier

Dec 31 @ 3pm - New Year's
Eve Service in Kingsburg

Dec 31 @ 4pm - New Year's
Eve Service in Visalia

Dec 31 @ 6pm New Year's Eve
Service in Fresno

**The Shotsuki names for the
month of December are:**

George Shuji Kato

Gunichi Kanenega

Munjiro Miyasaki

Sumiko Kondo

Komatsu Shimizu

Tom Kamikawa

Machiyo Sakoda

Minekichi Okasaki

Shinichi Tokubo

Tadaichi Morimatsu

Toyojiro Shimamoto

Hiroko Nakahira

Sadahei Mukai

Masato Mayebo

Yoshino Mukai

Tsuna Shimamoto

Hisaaki Notori

Shizuto Shimoda

Suye Kawamoto

Haruo Yoshimoto

Joe Sho Yokomi

Emma Kataoka

Toki Uchiyama

Larry Kazuo Ashida

Wilson Kawaguchi

Sadayuki Bob Nakayama

Sazae Kamine

Donald Hashimoto

**CHURCH TOBAN FOR
DECEMBER**

District V

**Riji: Cherie Nakayama
Diane Eskelsen**

**Toban: Karen Mukai
Cherie Nakayama**

CHURCH DUES

The 2021 church dues will remain the same as 2020 and can be paid now. If you have not paid your 2020 dues, please do so by the end of the year.

cancelled. We hope to continue our traditional mochitsuki in 2021.

MOCHITSUKI

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fowler Mochitsuki has been cancelled. We hope to continue our traditional mochitsuki in 2021.

November 2020 Donations

Shotsuki

\$ 150.00 Rick & Marlene Miyasaki
\$ 50.00 Tina Kato-Clarey
\$ 25.00 Cindy Inouye
\$ 25.00 Barton, Sharon & Lani
Ashida

Special Donations

\$5000.00 Fowler Buddhist Church
Golf Club
Fellowship Golf
Tournament

\$2000.00 Keith & Heidi Nakayama
& Family

Gerald & Cherie
Nakayama & Family

Bey & Susan Driss &
Family

Linda Matsumoto &
Family

In Memory of Pete & Florence
Nakayama

\$ 500.00 Gerald & Cherie
Nakayama & Family

In Memory of Betty Nakayama



FRESNO BUDDHIST TEMPLE

December 5th



TERIYAKI CHICKEN FUNDRAISER

is CANCELED!

WITH RISING COVID-19 CASES, FRESNO COUNTY HAS RETURNED TO
THE MORE RESTRICTIVE PURPLE TIER.

TO PROTECT OUR VOLUNTEERS AND SANGHA COMMUNITY,
WE HAVE DECIDED TO CANCEL THIS FUNDRAISER.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY PLACED AN ORDER, REFUNDS WILL BE
ISSUED. WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE BUT WE DO APPRECIATE
YOUR SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING. BE WELL!