

Tuyết Sơn Thiên Tự
Mt Adams Zen Buddhist Temple
雪山禪寺

February 2015 Newsletter



Happy Lunar New Year (農曆新年) the year of the horse
Buddhist year 2557 BE
Chuc mung nam moi

Dear Dharma friends, Happy Lunar New Year!



Thich Vinh Minh, is a Vietnamese monk currently studying at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Thailand, where he is completing his bachelor's degree in Buddhist studies. He will be visiting our temple from April 1 - May 31 2015. He joined in our recent trip to China and India and has been a student of Ven. Kozen for the several years. This will be his first trip to America, so please plan on welcoming him and maybe taking him sight seeing a bit so he can get a feel for our country. To the left is a photo of Thich Vinh Minh with Ven. Kozen on a recent trip to China under a Bodhi Tree.

May we all be well, may we all be happy, may we all know love, may we all know peace.
Thay Kozen

Join us on a trip to visit China

In September we will return to Abbot Ming Chan's beautiful and historic temple and attend a tea ceremony. The exact dates have yet to be determined. The Temple, Jia Shan, is the home of the Blue Cliff Records which Dogen Zenji studied. If you are interested in joining us please contact Thay Kozen

Also - Thay Kozen needs more airline miles to be able to go. If you have any Alaska or American miles you can donate to Thay Kozen it will be greatly appreciated.



The Guest House

by Jelaluddin Rumi *translation by Coleman Barks*

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

A guide for our practice

"Be soft in your practice. Think of the method as a fine silvery stream, not a raging waterfall. Follow the stream, have faith in its course. It will go its own way, meandering here, trickling there. It will find the grooves, the cracks, the crevices. Just follow it. Never let it out of your sight. It will take you". Ven. Sheng-yen (b. 1931)

We are a small Thien (Zen)
Buddhist Temple practicing
"laughing farmer zen" - living our
practice, sitting zazen, being here -
right now!



Services & Meditation

Morning Meditation 6:30AM
Tuesday - Saturday

Evening Meditation
6:30 PM
Thursday - Saturday

Morning Services
9AM
Thursday - Saturday

Sunday Evening meditation at
6:30 pm at Trinity Natural
Medicine
1808 Belmont Ave, Hood River,
OR

1st Sunday of the month
at Buu-hung Buddhist
Monastery 17808 NE 18th St,
Vancouver, WA

Tel: (360) 718-6158

3:30pm - 4:30 pm

Monthly Calendar

February

1 Buu Hung Monastery
18 CRCC Prison
18 New Years celebration at Co
Lam Pagoda (Chinese New Year)

March

1 Buu Hung Monastery
18 Mar CRCC Prison visit

April

4-5 Retreat - Buu Hung
21 Thay Kozen to CRCC
22 Earthday

Read This Carefully & Ponder Its Meaning

From incalculable eons in the past until now, through all the events of the universe, all periods of time, and all places without exception, none of it has been other than your own mind, all of it nothing other than

HEART OF GREAT PERFECT WISDOM SUTRA

(also know as the Heart Sutra)

This sutra is one of the most beloved of all the Mahayana Sutras. It is the story of a monk, Avalokiteshvara, who has realized the great awakening. He turns to his fellow monk, Shariputra, and explains the great emptiness.

Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva when deeply practicing prajna paramita clearly saw that all five aggregates are empty and thus relieved all suffering.

Shariputra, form does not differ from emptiness, emptiness does not differ from form. Form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself form.

Sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness are also like this. Shariputra, all dharmas are marked by emptiness; they neither arise nor cease, are neither defiled nor pure, neither increase nor decrease.

Therefore, given emptiness, there is no form, no sensation, no perception, no formation, or consciousness; no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind, no sight, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no object of mind; no realm of sight...no realm of mind consciousness.

There is neither ignorance nor extinction of ignorance...neither old age and death, nor extinction of old age and death; no suffering, no cause, no cessation, no path; no knowledge and no attainment.

With nothing to attain a bodhisattva relies on prajna paramita and thus the mind is without hindrance. Without hindrance, there is no fear. Far beyond all inverted views, one realizes nirvana. All buddhas of past, present, and future rely on prajna paramita and thereby attain unsurpassed, complete, perfect enlightenment.

Therefore, know the prajna paramita as the great miraculous mantra, the great bright mantra, the supreme mantra, the incomparable mantra, which removes all suffering and is true, not false. Therefore we proclaim the prajna paramita mantra, the mantra that says:

"Gate gate paragate parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha!"

There are several different translations of Gate Gate..., my favorite is:

"Gone, Gone, Gone beyond Gone beyond
Oh Yes!"

Gate means gone or going. (One translator describes it as Gone from suffering to the liberation of suffering. Gone from forgetfulness to mindfulness. Gone from duality into non-duality).

Gate gate means gone, gone or going going.

Paragate means gone all the way to the other shore. So this mantra is said in a very strong way. Gone, gone, gone all the way over to the other shore.

In *Parasamgate*, *sam* means the sangha, the entire community of beings. Everyone gone over to the other shore.

Bodhi is the enlightenment, or awakening. You see it and the vision of reality liberates you.

And *svaha* is a cry of joy or excitement, like "Hallelujah!" "Gone, gone, gone all the way over, everyone gone to the other shore, enlightenment, *svaha!*

Ususama Myō-ō is the deity of the lavatory

your own Buddha. Mind is Buddha, and it has always been thus. Apart from this mind there is no other Buddha to be understood. Apart from this mind there is no other place where wisdom and nirvana may be found.

Attributed to Bodhidharma from the *Blood Vein Discourse*

Is your group part of the Northwest Dharma Association? if not, it is time to join! If you are a solitary practitioner or without a sangha you can still donate dana (money). They are a clearing house for Buddhist Activity in the Northwest and need our support.



read more about the NWDA at <http://www.northwestdharma.org/>

A guide for our practice
"Be soft in your practice.
Think of the method as a fine silvery stream, not a raging waterfall. Follow the stream, have faith in its course. It will go its own way, meandering here, trickling there. It will find the grooves, the cracks, the crevices. Just follow it. Never let it out of your sight. It will take you".
Ven. Sheng-yen (b. 1931)

2015 Schedule

FEBRUARY

Feb. 7 **Parinirvana** or Nirvana Day - Mahayana Buddhist festival marking the anniversary of Buddha's death.

Feb. 9-11 **Ven. Kozen on Retreat**

Feb. 18 **CRCC** with Thay Kobai

Feb. 19 **New Year - Lunar - Tet** - the Lunar New Year - 2015 is the year of the goat or sheep (green sheep or green wood sheep year)

MARCH

Mar. 7 **Magha Puja Day** (1250 enlightened sages came to Buddha on their own to pay him their tribute)

Mar. 18 **CRCC**

APRIL

APRIL 1 - 30 **Thich Vinh Minh in residence**



Our new restroom shrine of Ucchusma (Ususama)

In Esoteric Buddhism, a Wisdom King is the third type of deity after Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The Sanskrit name literally translates as "knowledge king", thus the Chinese character meaning knowledgeable (and/or bright) is used, leading to wide array of alternative English names including Radiant King, among others like Guardian King, etc. Wisdom Kings belong to the Buddhist Pantheon. In Tibetan Buddhism, they are known as Heruka.

Ucchuṣma (or Uchushma) in Sanskrit means to dry or parch, that is, to clean up filth by burning, by fire, for fire is a great purifying agent.

In Japan, Ucchuṣma is a guardian of the bathroom, where his effigy is often present. He is known to the general public for his powers of purification of the unclean in particular in respect to sexual diseases.

According to the Shurangama Sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha asked the bodhisattvas and arahants to present their methods to understand the ultimate truth, the eighteenth to present his character was Ucchusma. The sutra states:

"Ucchushma came before the Buddha, put his palms together, bowed at the Buddha's feet, and said to the Buddha, I can still remember how many kalpas ago I was filled with excessive greed and desire. There was a Buddha in the world named King of Emptiness. He said that people with too much desire turn into a raging mass of fire. He taught me to contemplate the coolness and warmth throughout my entire body. A spiritual light coalesced inside and transformed my thoughts of excessive lust into the fire of wisdom. After that, when any of the Buddhas summoned me, they used the name 'fire-head.' From the strength of the fire-light samadhi, I accomplished Arhatship. I made a great vow that when each of the Buddhas accomplishes the way, I will be a powerful knight and in person subdue the demons' hatred. The Buddha asks about perfect penetration. I used attentive contemplation of the effects of heat in my body and mind, until it became unobstructed and penetrating and all my outflows were consumed. I produced a blazing brilliance and ascended to enlightenment. This is the foremost method."

The Surangama mantra is commonly chanted in the morning in Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese temples. according to the opening chapter of the Surangama Sutra, this Mantra was transmitted by Gautama Buddha to

April 4 **New Year - Therevada**
 4-5 **Buu Hung Retreat**
 April 11 **Buddha's Birthday**
 (Thien/ Chan)
 April 15 **CRCC** with Thay Vinh Minh
 April 22 **Earthday** - Celebration to promote ecology and respect for life on the planet as well as to encourage awareness of the growing problems of air, water and soil pollution.

MAY

May 1 - 31 **Thay Vinh Minh in residence**
 May 1-3 **Spring Retreat**
 May 9 **Wesak** or Buddha day The most important of the Buddhist festivals. It celebrates the Buddha's birthday, and, for some Buddhists, also marks his enlightenment and death.
 May 13 **CRCC** with Thich Vinh Minh

JUNE

June 13 **Amitabha Buddha Day**
 23 **CRCC**

JULY

Jul 11 **Asala** - Dharma Day The anniversary of the start of Buddha's teaching his first sermon , "The Wheel of Truth", after his enlightenment. July 25 **Ullambana** or "MuaVu Lan" (Obon) mother's day and ghost days celebrated or Aug 28 Ancestors' Day

AUGUST

Aug 1 **Avalokiteshvara Day**
 (Quan Te Am/ Kannon)
 Aug 4 **CRCC**
 Aug 22 **Ksitigarbha Day**

SEPTEMBER

1-25 Ven. Kozen on Retreat Sept.
 29 **CRCC**

OCTOBER

Oct 5 **BodhiDharma Day**
 Oct 23-25 **Fall Retreat**

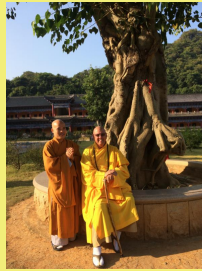
NOVEMBER

CRCC 5

DECEMBER

Dec 8 **Bodhi Day** - some Buddhists celebrate Gautama's attainment of enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya, India. (meditation 12/7 - 12/8 11:30pm - 12:30 am) 17
CRCC

Manjusri to protect Ananda before he had become an arhat. It was again spoken by the Buddha before an assembly of various enlightened beings and dharmapalas (Dharmapālas have a terrifying appearance and countenance, they are all bodhisattvas or buddhas, embodiments of compassion, that act in a wrathful way for the benefit of sentient beings.)



Thays Vinh Minh and Kozen in China

A Future For Buddhism In The United States of America

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EADcw_RsLbE&feature=youtu.be)

by Thich Vinh Minh

As we know, the origin of Buddhism is Asian. The founder of Buddhism was Prince Siddhartha Gautama; who became a fully enlightened (awakened) holy man, called The Buddha. He was born to a royal family in Nepal and attained full enlightenment at Bodhgaya India after many years of study and practice.

After the Buddha entered Nirvana (a state of the cessation of suffering) and later died, his disciples carried on his teachings. Initially there were many different schools that spread through India and to surrounding countries. After a period of time there arose 2 dominant schools, the Mahayana and Theravada traditions we know today.

Buddhism was not known in the west at the time of Buddha and only became known and studied in western culture around 100 years ago. Unfortunately, today there are still some people who have not heard about Buddhism or the Buddha. Many may know a little bit about meditation via yoga, class work, or the popular media. Today in the USA approximately 6% of the population identifies as Buddhist, and of that demographic approximately 45% are of oriental heritage.

Buddhism in the west has not been well understood. Many people of the Christian faith reject it outright, as they believe it involves some form of idol worship. It also appears to some western observers that there is a growing awareness of Buddhism and Buddhist practices. Great Dharma teachers have had their students and writings widely available in the USA. The most known teachers are His Holiness The Dalai Lama, Ajahn Chah, and Thich Nhat Hanh.

However, the spread of Buddhism is slow and often limited by ethnic practices.

When we talk about Buddhism in America we can see the ethnic practices very clearly. If you have a chance to visit a Vietnamese temple in the States, you can see that most of the people who came are middle aged or older. These people we call the first generation. The young generations come to the temple much less often and usually only for holidays. We can call these young people the second generation. The question arises, "Why does the second generation not practice in the same manner that their parents do?"

There are several obvious factors:

1. They feel bored with the Buddha's teaching - it is not a common faith in the US culture.
2. Traditional monks and nuns can't respond easily to the cultural and social needs of young people.
3. Differences in language occur as each new generation becomes more adapted to the culture around them. Many younger Vietnamese speak English as their primary language and Vietnamese poorly. The vast majority of Vietnamese monks and nuns speak some English and it is often poorly spoken with a strong accent.
4. Given the above facts, young people today are less inclined to be monks or nuns, so the clergy are usually directly from Vietnam, which intensifies the cultural issues.



Abbot Ming Chan, Hunan China

What will happen after the old people including the monks and nuns of a temple pass away? More "new monks" from Vietnam will not be able to address the young temple members in well spoken English and donations and attendance will diminish.

Eventually, Buddhism for ethnic Vietnamese won't be viable. Ethnic Buddhism will go away because the descendants of so many Vietnamese who came after the war no longer speak Vietnamese. As monks and nuns work to replace their numbers from their homeland, they are confronted with the changing Vietnamese society and increased dependence on English. Who will teach Buddha Dharma for the 2nd generation? As the 3rd generation comes into adulthood, will there be Vietnamese ethnic Buddhism in the States?

If we want to maintain Buddhism in the States we need to do several things:

1. We need to attract American people and help them learn of our temples and the Buddha's Dharma.
2. Most Americans want to do some form of meditation (which perhaps is a legacy from the many Zen teachers who have been teaching in the USA since the 1940s). We can provide meditation guidance.

As a son of the Buddha, What can I do now?

I can commit to supporting the teachings of the Buddha by:

1. Encouraging monks and nuns to teach the Buddha dharma in English.
2. Using language to make a good connection between people and Dharma. I will encourage monks and nuns to use language to show non-Buddhists some precious values of the Buddha's teaching.
3. We need our temples in the States to be aware of American culture, not just Vietnamese culture. Second generation Vietnamese people were born in the USA and they know more about American culture than their parents' homeland. Our temples need to become less ethnic specific and more embracing of all peoples.

Language and culture are the two wings of a bird. If one of them is broken then the bird no longer flies.

I wish that all beings may find peace in their lives.
Minh

Thay Vinh



A beautiful glow surrounds the main altar at 6 am, just prior to morning meditation.

Join us at 6:30 am

TUYẾT SƠN THIÊN TỰ + MT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE + 雪山禅寺

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