



KOKORO

NEW YORK BUDDHIST CHURCH



Okagesama de “Because of You”

July-August 2017

In the Japanese language, a commonly heard phrase is “okagesama de”. *Okagae* means “shadow”, *-sama*, means “in the state/condition of (being)”, and *de* means “by”. Literally the phrase means “in the state of being within your/one’s shadow”. It connotes being within another’s debt and is often used as a response when someone has been honored with a favor by another. It is also a phrase used to express gratitude.

Buddhism was introduced into Japan about 1,500 years ago. Phrases such as “okagesama de” indicate the influence of the Buddhist teachings in the lives of the Japanese and show the influence that Buddhism has played on the political, economic, social, artistic and other aspects of Japanese history and culture.

In the Buddhist vocabulary, there is also a word called *engi*. *Engi* expresses an awareness of the deep karmic inter-relationship and inter-connectedness of all things. It expresses the universal truth that all things are connected to each other and nothing can exist by itself or solely on its

own. Although we often say that “I can exist on my very own”, we could not exist without basics such as food, water, sunlight, air, companionship, etc. This concept or truth is not limited to just one condition but is universal in all aspects of our lives. Anything and everything has a connection with life and this is the “shadow” that we often forget.

The 8th Gomonshu, Rennyō Shonin, found a piece of paper that was trashed in the halls of Honzan, our Mother Temple. He questioned, “Who wastes this precious gift?” He was not looking at the fact that it may have been mere trash but was contemplating the countless number of causes and conditions which brought this piece of paper into existence. He was contemplating the source of the paper and the countless number of conditions of its existence—the growth of a tree, its felling, the processing and manufacture to strip and make it into pulp, and finally the completion of something called “paper”. He was looking beyond just the immediate material thing. Of course, many other processes were required; it took a number of natural conditions and many hands to make this single piece of paper. He was also using the piece of paper as a metaphor to make us more aware of our lives.

Each of us has received human form because of the countless numbers of accumulated merits. For endless eons of time we have been transmigrating in the Ocean of Birth and Death trying to find a way to be free from this cycle. Receiving human form indicates that one has succeeded in gaining sufficient merits to receive this, one of the highest forms of existence. Receiving this human form means that we also need to sustain it by realizing the deep inter-relationships and inter-connectedness of all things which sustain it. We need to awaken to the truth and accept responsibility for understanding that so many things and other people unconditionally sustain and make our lives meaningful. As one who has received human form, we must understand our overwhelming responsibility to all things and others that sustain and give us purpose. As humans, we need help!



Reverend Earl Ikeda

The phrase *okagesama de*, “because of you” recognizes the “gifts to sustain life” that are unconditionally given to us from so many different sources, material and non-material. However, too often we overlook or take these “gifts” for granted. When we take the time to reflect on life’s many miracles, this phrase helps us to reconnect to these karmic sources and universal truths. This phrase humbles us to realize that we cannot exist on our own. Contemplating upon this phrase, it helps us to become aware of a path that has always been there. It is the path to the realizing the Buddha’s unconditional vow to embrace us and help us more clearly to understand the nature of our existence. Awakening to this simple, but profound truth provides comfort and joy in appreciating the quality of daily life, a life of Namō Amida Butsu.

Cont. on p. 2

Okagesama de, cont. from p. 1

However, the phrase *okagesama de* is not the same as *Namo Amida Butsu*. There is no true way that we can fully understand the meaning and depth or benefit of calling the Buddha's Name. *Okagesama de* is the awareness and means to help us realize that through Amida Buddha's unconditional vow to embrace us, we are already on the path to understanding the fathomless depth of Buddha's Name and Vow of unconditional wisdom and compassion.

Okagesama de, due to the workings of countless numbers of causes and conditions, which sustain me, I am able to exist and realize something about myself and the dynamics of life. Realizing that I am a "foolish being" embraced unconditionally by the universal Vow of the Buddha, I hopefully wish to realize a heart and mind of true gratitude.

Namo Amida Butsu

Obon Service and Obon Dance Festival Changes

Due to Bryant Park scheduling the dates of our annual Obon Service and Dance Festival have been reversed. The Hatsu-bon Service will be observed on Sunday, July 9. The Obon Dance Festival will be observed on Sunday, July 23. Please see the Calendar for times and additional information. The NYBC is also chartering a bus to go to the Seabrook Bon Odori on Saturday, July 15. Please gather for the bus at 12:30.

Wagashi (Japanese Confections) Class July 8

July's cooking class will be on Wagashi. The topic will be *mochi-gome*, glutinous mochi rice, and will focus on making *seki-han*, red rice, and home-made *domyoji*, ground mochi rice use to make *sakura-mochi*. Please sign-up at the temple or call 212 678 0305 to reserve your spot. A donation of \$30 is requested.

「お盆法要」と「盆踊り」の変更のお知らせ 7月9日（日曜日）午前10時半から

ら初盆法要、午前11時半からお盆法要をお勤めしますので、どうぞお参りください。

また、ニューヨーク仏教会 盆踊りは、7月23日（日曜日）午後12時45分から5時までブライアント公園であります。盆踊りの練習は7月6、11、13、18、20日午後6時半より仏教会であります。

（参加無料）

池田住職の和菓子作り教室 7月8日（土曜日）

もち米が7月のテーマです。赤飯（せきはん）と桜餅（さくらもち）を作りますので、本堂にある申し込み用紙へお申し込みいただくか、電話（212-678-0305）で予約をお願いいたします。（仏教会会員は20ドル、その他の方は30ドルのご寄付をお願いします。）

Eiko Otake to Perform at Hiroshima and Nagasaki Memorial Service—August 6

Born and raised in Japan, MacArthur Fellow Eiko Otake is a New York-based movement artist, performer, and choreographer who for more than 40 years worked as Eiko & Koma. Since 2014, she has directed and performed a solo project, *A Body in Places*, in which she collaborates with photographer and historian William Johnston to create and present a series of exhibitions showing her dancing in irradiated Fukushima and elsewhere. She teaches an interdisciplinary course about the Atomic Bombings and Nuclear disasters at Wesleyan University and Colorado College.

Eiko will perform a short movement piece following the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Memorial Service on Sunday, August 6.

Eastern Buddhist League Conference at the Midwest Buddhist Temple, September 1-3

This year's EBL conference theme is "**North American Buddhism: A Path Forward**". Shin Buddhism has been present in America for over 100 years and participants at the conference will explore ways to grow Buddhism in North America by building diverse Sanghas. To that end, MBT has planned a series of seminars that will generate ideas and actions that participants can take back to their temples.

Reverend Kurt Rye from Placer Buddhist Church is the Keynote Speaker and as many of us know, he is an engaging, thoughtful and interesting speaker..

EBL conferences are a time for recreation and renewing acquaintances, and there'll be time for fun and fellowship. All activities are taking place at MBT and the MBT website at www.mbtchicago.org has comprehensive information about this Conference.

おかげさま
ニューヨーク仏教会住職 池田アール

ありがたく感じた時、よく「おかげさま」と言います。「大辞林」に、「お陰（かげ）とは、1 神仏の助け。加護（かご）。2 他人の助力、援助、庇護、3 物が原因となって生じた結果。効果・利益、または望ましくない結果や影響にもいう」と書かれています。「おかげさま」という言葉は、仏教の教えから生まれた感謝（かんしゃ）の心をあらわす言葉です。

仏教はインドから中国や朝鮮へわたり、552年ごろ日本へ伝えられました。また、ごぞんじのように、政治、文化、経済などあらゆるものに大きな影響（えいきょう）をあたえています。仏教をかたらずに日本の歴史や文化をかたることはできないでしょう。

仏教は「縁起・えんぎ」であるといえます。縁起について、中村元の「仏教語大辞典」に、「他との関係が縁（えん）となって生起（しょうき）すること。（Aに）よって（Bが）おこること。よって生ずることの意で、全ての現象（げんしょう）は無数の原因（因）や条件（縁）相互に関係しあって成立しているものであり、自由自在（どくりつじざい）のものではなく、諸条件（しょじょうけん）や原因（げんいん）がなくなれば、結果（果）もおのずからなくなるといふこと。仏教の基本的教説（きほんてききょうせつ）。」と書かれています。原因や条件が相互に関係してなりたち、一つとして独立した存在はなく、また条件や原因がなくなれば、結果（けっか）もおのずからなくなるといわれます。私たちは「誰のせわにもならず、立派に独立している」と考えています。しかし、それはまちがいです。我々は食べ物、水、太陽光、空気、人々などによって生かされているのです。この宇宙（うちゅう）に、一つでなり立っているものは何もありません。

本願寺第八代宗主 蓮如（れんによ・1415-1499）様は、紙が本堂に落ちていたので「一枚の紙もむだにしてはならない。」と言われたそうです。当時紙は貴重品でしたが、それだけのわけで紙をそまつにあつかってはならないと、注意されたのではないでしょう。紙を作るためには、目に見えない多くの「はたらき」や「ぎせい」によって紙が作られたのです。それを教えてくださったのです。

人間は不思議（ふしぎ）な因（いん）と縁（えん）によって生まれ、多くのものに支えられて存在（そんざい）します。しかし、私たちは他のものによって支えられ、生かされていることを当然と思い、感謝「おかげさま」を忘れがちです。我々は煩惱（ぼんのう）があるので、謙虚（けんきょ）に感謝（かんしゃ）し、頭を下げる事がむずかしいのです。もし、私の頭がさげるのではなく、さがったら、「すくわれた」のだと教えていただいています。

「おかげさま」と感謝することは、お念仏・南無阿弥陀仏と同じ、めざめへの道でしょう。親鸞さまはとても謙虚でした。謙虚に感謝することなく、めざめはないでしょう。阿弥陀仏の光（知恵）は本当のことが見えない私たちを、みすてることなく、てらし続けてくださいます。

弥陀仏の誓い「全ての人を必ず救う」ということをうたいなく信じ、常に自分をかえりみて、お念仏することが大切です。

ごいっしょに、お聴聞（ちょうもん・聞く）の生活をしていきましょう。

南無阿弥陀仏

(Trans. by A. Ishida)

Shotsuki Hoyo Memorial Services Schedule for 2017

Shotsuki hoyo is a traditional monthly service to remember your loved ones who died during that month, particularly in the intervals listed below. The Memorial Service provides a way to express your gratitude and recognize their continuing influence in your life. To arrange a shotsuki hoyo memorial service, please talk to Rev. Earl Ikeda or one of our minister's assistants.

2016... 1st Year	2015 ... 3rd Year	2011 ... 7th Year	2005 ... 13th Year
2001... 17th Year	1993 ... 25th Year	1985 ... 33rd Year	1968 ... 50th Year

The names of the persons we will be remembering this month and next are listed below.

<p>July 2016 Shotsuki Hoyo Service Sunday, July 2</p> <p>Arai, Juhei 1953 Hasegawa, Hikoji 2008 Hasegawa, Sono 1999 Hashimoto, Mineko 2014 Hashimoto, Roy 2015 Horishige, Fuji 1935 Horita, Tome 1978 Inaba, Masaharu 2011 Ishida, Yoshie 1979 Ishii, Manken-Toku 1988 Kato, Kimiko 2014 Kuchiba, Ayako 1986 Matsushita, Mae 2009 Matsushita, Michael Minh 2005 Mine, Isekichi 1972</p>	<p>Mitsui, Suma 1951 Mitsuuchi, Koichi 1993 Mozlin, Ellen 1991 Nishimura, Sakae Lotus 1999 Okuyama, Yasuo 1994 Otsuki, Joe Shigeo 1987 Sasaki, Toshi, NA Seki, Kazuo 2004 Seki, Hoken 2015 Seki, Reverend Hozen 1991 Sugai, George Yoshio 1982 Takeda, Hana, NA Tashiro, Kayoko 1962 Wakuya, Nancy Kimiyo 1998 Yampolsky, Philip 1996 Yasuda, Emi 1963 Yasuda, Noo Kemi 1955</p>	<p>Shotsuki Hoyo Service Sunday, August 6</p> <p>Armstrong, Jesse J. 2010 Bakhroushin, Irene 1988 Cohen, Edward 1984 Frias, Glenis 2008 Fukuyama, Janet 1991 Harada, Kiyomi Kim 1997 Harada, Sadako 2000 Hashimoto, Frank Tatsuya 1987 Hashimoto, Mineko 2014 Ikuta, Masayoshi 2013 Inoue, Chizuko 2010 Kikuchi, Inomatsu 1958 Kondo, Makiko 1998 Magome, Hiroko 1992 Mitani, Taeko 1988 Miura, Tadashi 2013 Miyazaki, Toshiaki 1998</p>	<p>Murase, Jiro 2014 Murata, Jeanne Kiyoko 1989 Nakagawa, Masahiko 1996 Namba, Yosuke 1941 Niki, Tsutomu 2005 Norbu, Athar 2001 Okuma, Goze 1944 Okuma, Tokusuke 1961 Primus, Edward W. II 1986 Shindo, Kazuya 1945 Soeda, Saichiro 1964 Takahashi, Kiyoshi 1997 Tamura, Masashiro 2007 Taoka, Tadashi 1935 Theodore, John Noel 1999 Tono, Matsuhei 1971 Tora, Shinichiro 1998 Yamamoto, Dean 2015 Yanagida, Shizuye 2012</p>
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Untitled Poem by Richard St. Clair

*Today I am feeling the weight of impermanence
the fact that we cannot rely on anything of this realm except
the pure pristine teaching which leads us to Buddhahood
the teaching of the Pure Land gifted to us by none other than
Amida Buddha Himself.*

*As Master Shinran has said ONLY THE NEMBUTSU IS
TRUE AND REAL*

*these are words that often in my dark mind I rebel against
as I indulge my blind passions, even though I know Master
Shinran's words are true.*

*As I encourage others note to rely on the things of this sam-
sarinic realm of suffering* Cont. on p. 6

In Memoriam

Our condolences and deepest sympathies to the friends of Midori Sasamoto who passed away in May at the Isabella Home.

A long-time NYBC and ABA (Adult Buddhist Assoc.) former member, Jane Yasuda passed away in CA on May 21, 2017. Her late husband, Ken, was past NYBC Board of Trustees chair and ABA president. There will be a memorial service in the fall. We extend our deepest condolences and sympathies to the family, relatives and friends.

Sangha News *By Ruth Funai*

Gertrude Kihara and I went on a People to People tour, an educational one, to Cuba. While still in Florida, we were instructed not to drink the water, brush our teeth or rinse our mouth- only bottled water. Also, since sewer system was poor, all tissues had to be put in separate containers when using the toilet -wow! Due to the embargo, no American banks, so no ATM, checks or credit card use-what!!! We had to have enough cash for any emergencies, medical, etc.

Our 9 days in Cuba started in Havana with cultural experiences which included visits with local artisans of photography, ceramics, choral music, schools of dance and music, art museums and Afro-Cuban dancers. We tried our hands at learning the salsa and no doubt the mojitas helped loosen us up at 10:00 in the morning. We learned about their history, their lifestyle and socialism with free medical care and education up thru college and university. We visited their national wildlife preserve seeing large rats and numerous crocodiles, toured cigar factory where they made hand-rolled cigars and a non-functioning sugar mill. We rode a bumpy, old sugar cane train with steam engine. During the trip, we had the thrill of riding other modes of transportation like a vintage 1950's classic car with ours being a bright pink convertible. We also, rode bici taxis (bicycle taxis) and a jarring ride on a horse-drawn wagon with wooden benches seating 6 people- poor horses!

We visited other colonial towns, like Bay of Pigs where snorkeling is now very popular, the fishing village where Ernest Hemingway wrote his novel, "Old Man and the Sea" and his home where his boat is kept. On a country roadway, we came upon endless strips of unhusked rice kernels being dried on the road and being swept up and bagged as far as the eyes could see



Gertrude and Ruth in a snappy 50's convertible.

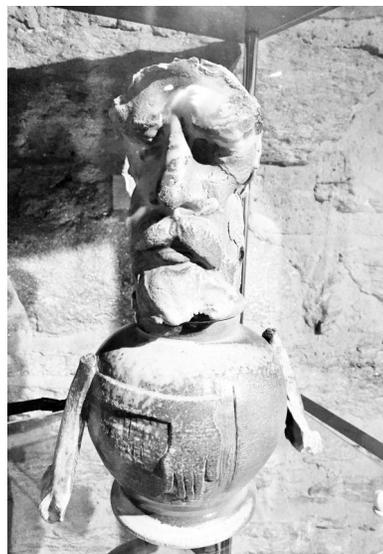
(amazing!). At Santa Clara, we saw a statue of Che Guevara holding children and visited a mausoleum where his ashes and his comrades are interred. At Trinidad, the oldest Spanish town, we walked along cobble stone streets.

Cuba has had to learn to be self-sustaining without help from super powers. Hence, they employ organic farming as there is little chemicals, machinery or replacement parts. The country is just reawakening, finding a renewed interest in tourism, and determined to maintain its form of socialism. What they lack in materials or good public transport system, they make up through using their human resources. Gertrude and I were very glad we had gone on the tour and wonder what improvements would be made in 5-10 years!

On June 9th, Yoriko and Tony Armstrong, Re. Earl and Dai Miyazaki visited the opening of Fugitive Vessels, which is a display of ceramics inspired, imagined, and created by NYBC member and ceramist Auguste Elder. The exhibit is in the basement of the Jefferson Market Library until the end of June and actually appeared to be a part of the Library's regular exhibits - the subjects came from the library itself. Mr Elder's work uses traditional Japanese pottery firing techniques and is inspired by Buddhist concepts of impermanence and Etruscan burial traditions.



Dai and Auguste at Auguste's exhibit.



A vessel by Auguste Elder.



SHIN BUDDHISM IN THE LAND OF SHAKYAMUNI

Saturday, July 29, 2017 from 10 am to 4 pm

with Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutia
Head Priest, Kathmandu-Hongwanji, Nepal

In this seminar, Rev. Sonam will tell us about his encounter with Shin Buddhism, and we will learn how transforming our everyday perceptions creates a richer appreciation of our lives.

Raised as a monk in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, Rev. Sonam, at age 28, encounters Jodo Shinshu, a Japanese Pure Land school.

From this meeting, he goes on to found Nepal's first Hongwanji temple.

Hear how the Buddha's story resonates today in Shakyamuni's birthplace.

Donation \$50 general/\$40 members. Coffee break and lunch included.

NEW YORK BUDDHIST CHURCH
331 Riverside Drive (between 105-106 St.) NY, NY 10025
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PRESENTED BY THE BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA CENTER FOR BUDDHIST EDUCATION

Advance Registration Forms are available at NYBC and from Isabelle Bernard

So Daiko News By Mac Evans

We have just finished up our last full performance of the season, performing for the Hartford Japan Society Festival in CT. It was a nice gathering with many vendors and performances, including another shishimai for us to take notes on.

As we move into July we will be preparing for Obons. We will be performing for Seabrook and NY Obon (as well as helping out with the Bon Dance drumming). Because of the scheduling this year, some of us hope to make the trip down to Ekoji Obon as well to support our other temple and support our sister group Nen Daiko.

Nen Daiko has been chosen as one of the performers for the 2017 North American Taiko Conference final concert, Taiko Jam. We are super excited to support them and also we are excited to go and enjoy NATC. This is a gathering of taiko artists throughout the country, and really throughout the globe, coming together and sharing knowledge and passion for taiko drumming. Members of Soh Daiko will be taking workshops and otherwise enjoying the experience of meeting new and old friends alike.

www.sohdaiko.org
www.facebook.com/sohdaiko

Sangha Day 2017

By Anthony Armstrong

On Sunday June 4th, the Sangha had another opportunity to show off the talents of its members through another Sangha Day. After nourishing ourselves on the delicious and eclectic potluck, we were entertained with music, dance recitals, and a philosophical commentary.

Poem, Cont. from p. 4

I find on reflection that I am a hypocrite for I love the impermanent things of my life here with all its attractions however impermanent they are and I am as well.

So Of a repentant mind I take refuge in Amida Buddha for I know He embraces me and saves me through His incomparable gift of Shinjin, of Salvation in the present despite and because of my evil karma Cont. on back page

Sangha Day 2017



Clockwise from top, the Uke Strummers, Teddy Yoshikami and Children's Taiko, Tony Di Tomasso on Uke and Derik Kumagai looking cute as ever with his stylish man bun.

KOKORO

**www.NewYorkBuddhist
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212-678-0305

**Resident Minister: Rev. Earl
Ikeda**

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Nancy Okada at 212-678-0305.

Contributors: Rev. Earl Ikeda, Ruth Funai, M.A. Koue Akemi Ishida, Karl Palma, Nancy Okada, Isabelle Bernard, Cheryl Ikemiya, Gary Jaskula, Mac Evans, Tony Di Tomasso, Brian McGurgan, Richard Gross, Tony Armstrong, Chieko Nakagawa and the Buddhist Women's Association mailing team.

Articles and especially photographs are welcome and will be published subject to suitability of content and availability of space.

Send contributions to Kokoro Editors: Gail Inaba, ginaba@optonline.net and Mariko Kato at mkatony@hotmail.com.

Cont. from p. 6

And my burdensome blind passions.

Namu Amida Butsu

Thank You for saving me, dear Amida, as foolish bombu not worthy of You yet You are my Savior nevertheless.

Namu Amida Butsu

Thank You, Amid Buddha! I worship You Amida Buddha! I adore You, Amida Buddha!

Deadline for submitting articles, information and photos for the June Issue of Kokoro is Tuesday, August 15



kokoro

July-August 2017



New York Buddhist Church

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New York, NY 10025**

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