



BUDDHA'S MESSAGE

By Reverend Myokyo Shigemitsu-Coy

We all know Buddha's name "Shakamuni Buddha." Buddha means "awakened one" or the "enlightened one." What was he awakened from? How was he enlightened? His teachings were memorized by his followers; and his teachings were passed down orally since there was no paper in ancient India.

His teachings are about suffering. Suffering is an ingrained part of existence. The mind creates suffering as a natural product of a complex process. His teachings are not pessimistic but rather realistic and optimistic.

There is a story about Shakamuni Buddha. When he was practicing and meditating in the deep forest under dark and scary circumstances, he was suffering. He was trying to escape from fear. Trying to get rid of the fear only increased his fear. He was still suffering badly. He kept practicing and meditating. Suddenly he realized that he could not escape from this circumstance. He encouraged himself to see the reality of the situation and accepted his situation. He could now calm down and the fear decreased and finally disappeared. He was no longer suffering as before. Buddha noticed that others were suffering from fear as he was. He shifted his mind to saving others instead of suffering himself. He could change his negative energy to positive energy.

People suffer as long as they keep a strong attachment with themselves, their desires, their lives, position and become materialistic, etc.

How can we live in a peaceful world? Pray for others, care for other people's feelings; offering to others; and sharing in the happiness we have for each other. This is the way to Nirvana and the end of suffering!

Gassho ...



INTRODUCING KALEB SNIDER



If you have been attending Koyasan's monthly services or attended our Toronagashi Service at William Land Park, you may have noted that a new person now assists Reverend Coy during the services. His name is Kaleb Snider. Originally from a small town in East Texas called Lufkin, Kaleb moved to Sacramento in January 2024 to attend the California State University in Sacramento where he is currently working towards his bachelor's degree. He is studying both anthropology and religion.

Kaleb says that he has had a rather unorthodox life. He dropped out of school in the 5th grade, which allowed him to pursue his own interests at my own speed. He spent time in the outdoors in nature getting to know the natural world and exploring his inner self. That started his journey towards Buddhism.

His mother had always been interested in Buddhism and was inspired by Tina Turner and her turn towards *Nichiren* Buddhism. Buddhism had always been something he was aware of. He saw how it helped his mother; and how it had been a comfort to himself through chanting and meditation. He stated that he never had the chance to practice properly as he was in "middle of



Northern California Koyasan Temple

1400 U Street, Sacramento, CA 95818-1417

(916) 444-0111 info@nckoyasan.org

DECEMBER 2025

NEWSLETTER

nowhere" East Texas so when he moved to California His first order of business was to start exploring the religion properly.

Kaleb initially found himself practicing *Tendai* esoteric Buddhism (the sister lineage to *Shingon*) on Zoom with the California Tendai Monastery in Cobb. However, the reverend there encouraged him to pursue the similar Japanese esoteric practice of *Shingon* that, as he told him, "had more to offer him," here at the Northern California Koyasan Temple.

Since coming here, he realized that this was the path for him. Under the guidance of Reverend Coy, he has naturally fallen into the position as temple assistant. He is now pursuing the path towards ordination. He hopes to help the young and future generations towards the practice that he knows has helped me so tremendously; and create a new era for Buddhist practice in America. He indicated that he feels very indebted to this temple and is ever grateful for the community here. He always looks forward to helping and being involved in whatever way he can.

TAIKO EVENTS

A Return to Self through Movement & Creativity

Photo and article by David Sakauye

On October 25th the Koyasan Temple Taiko Group performed for the runners and walkers participating in the "Run for A Safe Haven".

The event was held by My Sister's House, whose mission is to eliminate domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking in our region.

Light rain didn't stop 12 performing members! It was the first performance for some of the taiko members and they were honored to play for a great cause!



ANNUAL TEMPLE CLEAN-UP

A huge thank you to all who participated in the mass Temple Clean-Up! Thanks to all your efforts the chapel and shrine are sparkling clean – even the pews shine! The kitchen is unrecognizable and the grounds outside have been cleaned and trimmed. Even the roof received some TLC.



Northern California Koyasan Temple

1400 U Street, Sacramento, CA 95818-1417

(916) 444-0111 info@nckoyasan.org

DECEMBER 2025

NEWSLETTER



Karate Group members who helped us out. It didn't take them long to accomplish so much in record time. Both Gary Matsumoto and Kaori Sakauye were there to help direct and coordinated their respective groups in making the cleaning and maintenance projects a breeze.

Pictured here on the right is Kelvin Ronay who volunteered his time to do some trimming. Kelvin is a professional tree expert and has offered to do a hands-on pruning workshop during the next Temple clean up.

The heavy lifting maintenance jobs were in the capable hands of Gary Matsumoto, Calvin Matsumoto, Dave & Shota Sakauye, Stuart Noda, Steve Miura, David Baldrige and Brent Knight.

Arigato to all!

WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

*Mind precedes all mental states.
Mind is their chief.
They are all mind-wrought.*

All that we are is a creation of our mind.

*We are shaped by our thoughts.
We become what we think.
When the mind is pure,
joy follows like a shadow that never leaves.*

*If with an impure mind, a person speaks or acts,
suffering follows. If with a pure mind,
a person speaks or acts, happiness follows.*

*Do not dwell in the past.
Do not dream of the future.
concentrate the mind on the present moment.*

YEAR END MESSAGE

Liz Yokoyama, Cabinet President

2025 is soon coming to an end. All that we have experienced during this past year will reside in the rear-view mirror. We look forward to tomorrow and the coming year. Whether your experiences this past year have been good, bad or in between, it's a good time for all of us to reflect from within. Despite any negativity you may have faced this past year, always remember that nothing stays good or bad forever.

I am hoping that for you, your family and friends that the coming year centers more on the positive rather than the negative. If you think negatively, you will draw more negativity towards you are yourself. The true is the same for its counterpart. The more positive you are - the



Northern California Koyasan Temple

1400 U Street, Sacramento, CA 95818-1417

(916) 444-0111 info@nckoyasan.org

DECEMBER 2025

NEWSLETTER

happier you are. Case in point, we all feel good around positive, upbeat and fun people. In fact, we gravitate towards them. You certainly don't want to spend time with a Debbie Downer! Moving towards the positive – place love, faith, spirituality, family and friends at the top of your life's priority list. A place where all these qualities reside is the NC Koyasan Temple. Make it your second home. I ask that you attend the monthly services with you and your family and cement those qualities into your lives and the lives of others. Help us bring back the importance of community and heritage into your lives. If you are Japanese, help us retain some of our culture (the Japanese dishes, family New Year gatherings, Obon, tea ceremonies to name few). If you're not, open yourselves up to new experiences and become part of a community based on the teachings of the Buddha with friends and family.

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all of you for being a part of the Temple's family and friends. You have all helped to contribute to our success. Many of you have taken time from your busy lives to help with our fundraisers; day to day operations; kept our building and grounds well maintained; and contributed monetarily towards the Temple's upkeep and operations.

My very sincere gratitude to the Temple Cabinet members to include:

- Trent Sunahara, VP
- Secretaries Margie Sunahara & Carol Ito
- Treasurer Carol Kawano (assisted by Alice Tateishi & Caren Yamamoto)
- David Baldrige for technical webpage support
- Janis & Marilyn Yokoyama, outreach & publicity support
- Kaori Sakauye, Taiko (to include the group's hard work and support)
- Gary Matsumoto, Karate (to include the group's hard work & support)
- Larry Sunahara for building and grounds deferred maintenance

And a thank you to Reverend Coy, who has done an outstanding job as the head minister of our Temple. It is through her efforts and her knowledge of Buddhism that makes us shine. The services are much more memorable and many of our past religious customs have returned. Arigato Gozaimasu Sensei!

A shout out to our new Minister's Assist, Kaleb Snider. We welcome you and thanks for assisting Reverend Coy.

Finally, I now hand the reins of leadership to Trent Sunahara. Beginning in January 2026, Trent will serve as our new Koyasan Cabinet President. I will still remain on the Cabinet as the Vice President and chair the services. I know that Trent will do an exceptional job as our next president. Please join me in congratulating him. Arigato to you all and Happy Holidays to you all. It was a pleasure serving as your President.

With Gassho,
Liz Yokoyama

AJI CORNER

Contributed by Ikyko Kawano

BAKED SALMON

Ingredients

Fresh salmon filet (or frozen salmon) from Costco
Butter
Dill



Salt

Pepper

Lemon slices

Directions

Salt and pepper salmon. Place in casserole dish. Sprinkle with dill, put pats of butter and lemon slices on each piece of salmon.

Bake uncovered for 45 minutes at 350 degrees. Enjoy!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Following the December 21st monthly service there will be a general meeting held in the chapel to discuss the Temple plans and operations for the coming year. You are all encouraged to attend and participate in upcoming Temple functions.

Following the general meeting we will have our Annual Year End Potluck and bingo in the Temple's Social Hall. Please bring your favorite dish to share and please bring a small gift to be used as bingo prices. If your gift is for a child or is gender specific (ie: perfume for a women), please specify on the gift: For female child; male child, adult female or male.

Upcoming Services (In-house & Zoom at 1:30 pm unless posted otherwise)

December 21 – *Osame Daishiku* Service & General Meeting (with year-end potluck and bingo)

December 31 – Joya Service at 5:00 p.m.

January 1 – New Year's Day (*Shusho-e*- Service w/Goma Ritual)

January 18 – *Hatsu Daishiku* Service (ozone will be served)

February 15 – *Hoshi Matsuri* Service & *Mame-maki* Ritual w/Goma Ritual (ozoni served)

March 15 – Spring Higan Memorial Service

March 22 – Special Blessing Service – “*Kannon Bosatsu*”

For more information about the Northern California Koyasan Temple, please visit our website at www.nckoyasan.org

Mark Your Calendars!



December 13 – Mochi Sale (11:30 am)

February 7 – Temple Workshop (1:30 pm)

February 22—Pancake Breakfast & Bake Sale (7:30-10:30 am)

February 24 – Meditation Class & Traditional Japanese



February 28 – Meditation Class & Traditional Japanese
Tea Workshop (1:30 pm)

March 21 – Meditation Class & Traditional Japanese
Tea Workshop (1:30 pm)

Newsletter Staff

Editorial Staff:

Liz Yokoyama, Carol Kawano,
Carol Ito

Editorial Contributors:

Reverend Myoko Shigemitsu-Coy,
Carol Ito, Kaori Sakauye, Gary
Matsumoto, Liz Yokoyama

Photos:

Gary Matsumoto, Jeff Wong, Liz