

The
Nashville
Buddhist
Festival
2008

schedule

- 10:50 a.m. Opening: 108 invitations of the gong
- 11:00 a.m. "Being Present" Opening with Metta Meditation
- 11:25 a.m. One Dharma Nashville (*inclusive of all traditions*)
- 12:00 p.m. The Insight Meditation Group (*Theravada*)
- 12:35 p.m. Yoga to enhance meditation, by Leah Lillios, Kali Yuga Yoga
- 1:00 p.m. Group chanting – The Diamond Sutra
- 1:15 p.m. Question & Answer Panel
- 1:45 p.m. The Nashville Mindfulness Center (*Zen*)
- 2:20 p.m. Group chanting – The Heart Sutra
- 2:40 p.m. The Nashville Zen Center (*Zen*)
- 3:20 p.m. Shambhala Meditation Group of Nashville (*Tibetan*)
- 3:55 p.m. Group chanting – Mantra
- 4:05 p.m. Padmasambhava Buddhist Center (*Tibetan Vajrayana*)
- 4:40 p.m. Question & Answer Panel
- 5:00 p.m. Closing: 108 invitations of the gong

Master of Ceremonies: Chris Moore



Welcome

When Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha, attained enlightenment, he penetrated the deepest riddles of existence and the knotty problems that cause suffering for all beings. He then gave teachings to others who wanted to find the same freedom. As Buddhism spread from India throughout Asia in the course of over 2500 years, various techniques flourished in different areas, but with the same base. Now the teachings have come to the west, and for the first time in history all the methods are practiced in one place.

Today you will hear and have the opportunity to try methods from all the major traditions of Buddhism. Buddhism in Nashville is diverse yet compatible. Six different centers have united together to offer this festival to the community, with the theme of "Being Present."

When we are present, we are able to access our own inner wisdom and face each moment with freshness and awareness. We are able to be there... for ourselves, our work, our family, and our relationships. Through being intimately related to each moment as it arises in our experience, we can transcend our limited identities and habitual patterns, and connect deeply with the mystery of life itself, as did Buddha Shakyamuni himself.

The practice of being present transcends all religious and cultural boundaries and is introduced through meditation and mind training techniques that are appropriate for anyone. Whether you are an experience meditator or simply curious, we hope you'll find some benefit here today.

Thank you for being present.



Basic meditation

The practice of meditation is common to all Buddhist traditions. The Buddha compared the mind to a wild elephant that is dangerously destructive when wild, but extremely useful when tamed. To tame it, we must see for ourselves, to experience directly what the Buddha taught. This is the reason why we meditate. As we meditate, we continuously discover who and what we are.

Body Posture

Whether sitting in a chair, on a bench, kneeling or sitting crosslegged on the floor, it is important that the back is straight without being tense or rigid. Also, sit so there is some expansion of the chest and the abdomen, so that the breath can flow easily. The head rests naturally, with the chin slightly tucked in. The eyes can be closed to minimize distraction, or they can be open and softly gazing downwards. The hands rest together in the lap or on the knees.

The Practice

Meditation is called practice for the very reason that we are developing good habits and outlooks to improve our minds and assist those around us. In meditation we cultivate our capacity to be aware of what is happening in the present moment. Though there is a very rich menu of focal points in Buddhism, an anchor for awareness is the breath. As you sit quietly, direct your awareness to your breath without trying to change the breath in any way. Just feel the natural movement of the breath in the body. When you become aware that you have been daydreaming, quietly let go of those thoughts and gently return the attention to the breath, without forcing. You will need to begin again, and again, and again.

By strengthening this capacity to begin again, we are actually becoming more present to life. In doing so, we free ourselves from the tyranny of our thoughts and emotions and see our experience and lives more clearly. From this path we discover an authentic way of being in the world with more joy and inner freedom.

A key tenet of any teaching on meditation is not to have any expectations for your experience. They will only get in the way of your progress. Each day, each moment, will be different from the one before. However, over time, if practicing properly, one's meditation and mind will become calmer and more focused.

To make sure your technique and approach is correct, it's important to check in with those who have meditation experience with any questions you have, and to sit with others if you have the chance. All the groups here offer such opportunities (see group descriptions). Above all, be kind to yourself when you feel the experience is less than perfect: the ultimate goal of meditation is to open your heart.

metta sutta

Forgiveness — *To be chanted aloud by all as prompted:*

If by deed, speech or thought, foolishly have I done wrong, may all forgive me,
honored ones, who are in wisdom and compassion strong.
I freely forgive anyone who has hurt or injured me.
I freely forgive myself.

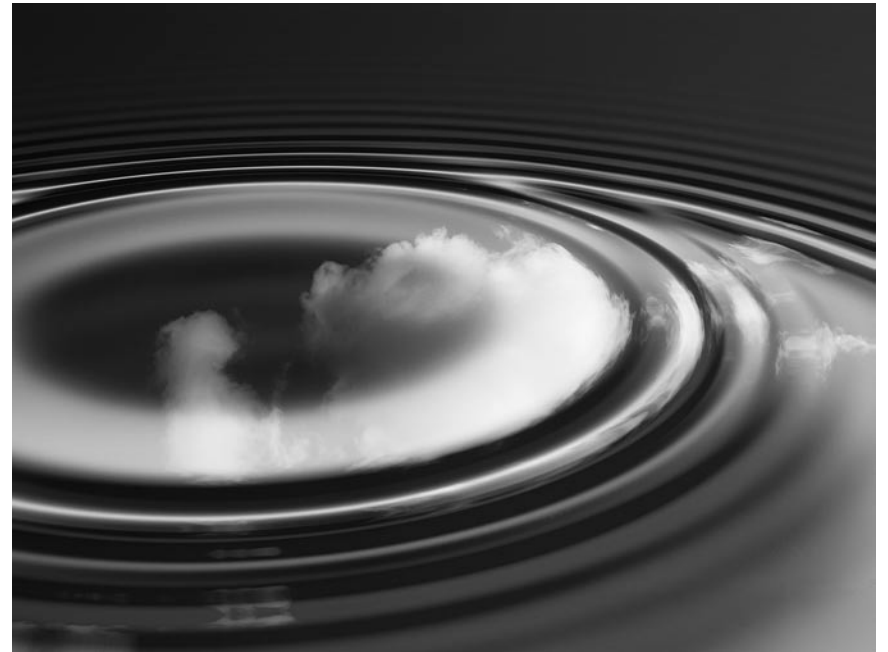
Loving Kindness — *To be chanted silently to oneself as prompted:*

May I be well, happy and peaceful.
May my teachers be well, happy and peaceful.
May my parents be well, happy and peaceful.
May my relatives and family members be well, happy and peaceful.
May my friends be well, happy and peaceful.
May all indifferent people be well, happy and peaceful.
May all unfriendly people be well, happy and peaceful .
May all meditators be well, happy and peaceful.
May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.
May all beings be free from suffering.
May all beings be free from From fear.
May all beings be free from From sorrow, sadness and despair.
May all beings have happy minds.
May all beings have healthy bodies.
May all beings be content with the way things are.
May all beings live happily together.
May all beings be well, happy and peaceful.
May all beings, in all directions, and without exception, be liberated.

Verse:

May suffering ones be suffering free,
And the fearstruck, fearless be.
May the grieving shed all grief
And all beings find relief.

— In Theravada Buddhism's Pali Canon, metta is one of the four "divine abodes"
(Pali: brahmavihara) recommended for cultivating interpersonal harmony and meditative
concentration. It is valued by Buddhists of all schools.



The diamond sutra

So you should view this fleeting world...

A star at dawn, a bubble in a stream,

A flash of lightning in a summer cloud,

A flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream.

— Excerpted from Section XXXII of the Diamond Sutra, ("The Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom of the Diamond that Cuts Through Illusion"). The Diamond Sutra is a short Mahayana scripture of the Perfection of Wisdom genre, which teaches the practice of the avoidance of abiding in extremes of mental attachment.

Heart sutra

The Sutra of the Heart of Transcendent Knowledge

Thus have I heard. Once the Blessed One was dwelling in Rajagriha at Vulture Peak mountain, together with a great gathering of the sangha of monks and a great gathering of the sangha of bodhisattvas. At that time the Blessed One entered the samadhi that expresses the dharma called “profound illumination,” and at the same time noble Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva mahasattva, while practicing the profound prajnaparamita, saw in this way: he saw the five skandhas to be empty of nature.

Then, through the power of the Buddha, venerable Shariputra said to noble Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva mahasattva, “How should a son or daughter of noble family train, who wishes to practice the profound prajnaparamita?”

Addressed in this way, noble Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva mahasattva, said to venerable Shariputra, “O Shariputra, a son or daughter of noble family who wishes to practice the profound prajnaparamita should see in this way: seeing the five skandhas to be empty of nature. Form is emptiness; emptiness also is form. Emptiness is no other than form; form is no other than emptiness. In the same way, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness are emptiness. Thus, Shariputra, all dharmas are emptiness. There are no characteristics. There is no birth and no cessation. There is no impurity and no purity. There is no decrease and no increase. Therefore, Shariputra, in emptiness, there is no form, no feeling, no perception, no formation, no consciousness; no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no appearance, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no dharmas, no eye dhatu up to no mind dhatu, no dhatu of dharmas, no mind consciousness dhatu; no ignorance, no end of ignorance up to no old age and death, no end of old age and death; no suffering, no origin of suffering, no cessation of suffering, no path, no wisdom, no attainment, and no non-attainment. Therefore, Shariputra, since the bodhisattvas have no attainment, they abide by means of prajnaparamita.

Since there is no obscuration of mind, there is no fear. They transcend falsity and attain complete nirvana. All the buddhas of the three times, by means of prajnaparamita, fully awaken to unsurpassable, true, complete enlightenment.

Therefore, the great mantra of prajnaparamita, the mantra of great insight, the unsurpassed mantra, the unequaled mantra, the mantra that calms all suffering, should be known as truth, since there is no deception. The prajnaparamita mantra is said in this way:

OM GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE BODHI SVAHA

Thus, Shariputra, the bodhisattva mahasattva should train in the profound prajnaparamita.

Then the Blessed One arose from that samadhi and praised noble Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva mahasattva, saying, “Good, good, O son of noble family; thus it is, O son of noble family, thus it is. One should practice the profound prajnaparamita just as you have taught and all the tathagatas will rejoice.”

When the Blessed One had said this, venerable Shariputra and noble Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva mahasattva, that whole assembly and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised the words of the Blessed One.

— *The Heart Sutra contains the essence (“heart”) of the Perfection of Wisdom class of Mahayana Buddhist scriptures (Sanskrit: Prajñāparamita) and is considered by many to be the primary representative of the genre.*

Om gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha

mantra practice

Mantra practice is prevalent in the Vajrayana tradition of Buddhism, as practiced in Tibet. It is not the same as chanting ordinary words. Recited in Sanskrit, they are said to be “sound symbols”—sounds that correspond to and evoke the inner spiritual energies that can be outwardly represented in visual forms such as Tara, Avalokiteshvara, etc. The sound of the mantra is also meditation, and you can use it as a technique to aid your practice.

Buddha Shakyamuni

TADHYATA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNA-YE SVAHA

Avalokiteshvara

OM MANI PEME HUNG

Tara

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA

Amitabha

OM AMI DEWA HRIH

Guru Padmasambhava

OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUNG

Dedication of Merit

By this merit may all obtain omniscience.

May it defeat the enemy, wrongdoing.

From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death,

From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings.



Host centers

The Nashville Buddhist Festival is brought to you by six local dharma centers who host weekly practices and periodic retreats. We come together in a spirit of mutual support and harmony to offer the festival to the community, with the wish that it be beneficial to all who attend. You are warmly invited to contact or attend any of our groups.

The Nashville Insight Meditation Group (Theravada)

www.thebuddhisttemple.org • email lee@keithcase.com • 615.271.1711

We are a group meeting together to engage in Buddhist Vipassana (or insight) meditation. You don't have to know anything about meditation or Buddhism to try meditation – you can start where you are.

Meditation instruction and Dhamma talks are given every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday morning at 9 a.m., at The Buddhist Temple at 99 Lyle Avenue, Nashville, TN. Sessions are currently being led by Ven. Bhikku Nyanasobhano, who was ordained as a monk in the Theravada tradition in Bangkok, Thailand in 1987. Ven. Nyanasobhano teaches according to the Buddha's discourses found in the Pali Canon. He is the author of three books of Buddhist thought: *Landscapes of Wonder*, *Longing for Certainty and Available Truth*. Ven. Nyanasobhano teaches Buddhism for everyday living that is based on the three divisions of the eight fold path: ethical conduct, concentration and wisdom. We invite you to come and participate.

The Nashville Mindfulness Center (Zen)

nashvillemindfulness.org • 615.673.3366 • compassion@nashvillemindfulness.org

The Nashville Mindfulness Center is dedicated to the practice of mindful meditation in the tradition of Zen master and Nobel Peace prize nominee Thich Nhat Hanh. Our practice at the NMC is one of touching the wondrous, refreshing, and healing elements inside us and around us, and nourishing the seeds of joy, peace, love, and understanding in ourselves, thus facilitating the work of transformation and healing in our consciousness. Much of what we do is guided meditation immediately accessible to those with little or no experience. Through the teachings of the Buddha's realization of enlightenment, we cultivate compassion, insight, and awareness. We are aware that life is available only in the present moment and that it is possible to live happily in the here and now . . . We smile often.

A meditation practice center since 2003, the Nashville Mindfulness Center was officially established as a mindfulness center in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh in March of 2006, the center is coordinated by Skip Ewing. Meetings are held at 7618 Buffalo Road Sundays 9:30 a.m.–11 a.m., Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Orientation both days 30 minutes prior.

The Nashville Zen Center (Zen)

www.nashvillezencenter.org • 615.714.4656 • email info@nashvillezencenter.org

The Nashville Zen Center (*Bringing NoThing to Nashville Since 1982*) was founded in 1982 by people interested in Zen Buddhist practice. Like each of us, our Center has no fixed Self—and has evolved and undergone many changes over the years. Currently, we offer Zen practice in the Soto tradition (Japanese), in the lineage of Zengaku Soyu Matsuoka, Roshi. We welcome everyone to experience this practice with us—from the merely curious to the serious seeker—we have a cushion just for you!

What we do (or strive for...per Bodhidharma!):

A special transmission outside of the scriptures. No dependence upon words or letters. Direct pointing at the soul of man. Seeing into one's own nature and the attainment of Buddhahood

For more information contact info@nashvillezencenter.org or call Nat at (615)714- 4656, or just come sit with us at the 12South Dharma Center, 2301 12th Ave. S. Ste. 202, Nashville, TN 37204. We meet Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. and Saturday mornings at 7:30 a.m. The Tuesday evening sit provides orientation for newcomers; newcomers on Saturdays should arrive a few minutes early.

One Dharma Nashville (Inclusive of all Traditions)

www.onedharmanashville.com • email lisa@lisaernst.com • 615.376.7933

One Dharma Nashville is a meditation group that embraces all Buddhist traditions and is not affiliated with any one. The three main Buddhist traditions of Zen, Vipassana and Tibetan have in common key elements and practices such as mindfulness, loving-kindness, compassion and non-attachment. These practices took root from Buddha's strong aspiration that all beings find peace and freedom from suffering. At One Dharma, we put the emphasis on these core practices which can be utilized by anyone, whether Buddhist or not.

One Dharma Nashville meets each Monday night, 7:00–8:30 at the 12South Dharma Center, 2301 12th Ave. S., Ste. 202. Our service consists of meditation, chanting and discussion. Experienced meditators, as well as those who are completely new to Buddhist teachings and practices are welcome to join us. Our Dharma Study Group, which is an open meeting, convenes every second and fourth Saturday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. We also offer a once-monthly practice session for newer mediators with the emphasis on the basics of dharma practice. These meetings are usually the third Wednesday of each month. We offer periodic one- and three-day retreats. For more information on our practice and meeting schedule, please email us or visit our website.

Padmasambhava Buddhist Center (Tibetan Vajrayana)

www.pbc-tn.org • 292-6219 • email info@pbc-tn.org

Padmasambhava Buddhist Center (PBC) spreads the teachings of Buddhism according to the Nyingma Lineage, the most ancient Buddhist school of Tibet. The Center was established in New York in 1989 by two eminent Tibetan masters, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche, brother lamas who escaped Tibet in 1959. PBC currently has over 20 centers in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Russia. The Venerable Khenpos established the Tennessee center in 1987, which now includes an urban center in Nashville and a rural retreat center outside Monterey.

In Nashville, meetings are offered five days a week at our dharma center, Yeshe Tsogyal House, 419 East Iris Drive in the Bransford Avenue area near 100 Oaks Mall. All sessions are open to visitors, and Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. are introductory in nature and particularly accessible for guests. Retreats with the Venerable Khenpo Rinpoches are offered once or twice a year and are open to all. For our full schedule and more information, please call or visit our website.

The Shambhala Meditation Group of Nashville (Tibetan)

www.shambhala.org/center/nashville • 262-2895

email nashville.sangha@comcast.net

The Shambhala Meditation Group of Nashville follows in the tradition of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist meditation master and author of a dozen books including, *The Myth of Freedom*, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, and *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*. He was one of the most prominent Buddhist teachers of our time, and a pioneer in bringing Buddhism to the West. His son, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, who now leads Shambhala International and its affiliated organizations, is a holder of the Kagyü and Nyingma lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, and of the Shambhala teachings.

Nashville Shambhala Meditation Group meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday from 10am-12 noon at the 12South Dharma Center, 2301 12th Avenue South, Suite 202 (upstairs rear). All sessions are open to new meditators and visitors from other traditions. There is no charge for instruction or participation. Shambhala weekend courses and weekend retreats directed by visiting Shambhala teachers are held periodically.

Thanks to our guest yoga instructor, Leah Lillios:

Kali Yuga Yoga

www.kaliyugayoga.com • 260-5361 • info@kaliyugayoga.com

Ongoing classes and workshops at 10011 Fatherland Street in East Nashville.



The Nashville Buddhist Festival 2008 Board of Directors

Paul Felton, President
The Shambhala Meditation Group

Lisa Ernst, Treasurer
One Dharma Nashville

Bob Jarrell, Secretary
Nashville Zen Center

Skip Ewing
Nashville Mindfulness Center

Rita Frizzell
Padmasambhava Buddhist Center

Lee Olsen
The Nashville Insight Meditation Group

Many thanks to all the friends and volunteers who help make this event possible. May the merit of these activities benefit all beings.



www.nashvillebuddhistfestival.com