



UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE

April 2022 Newsletter

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Food Distribution to the Elderly

Bhante Buddharakkhita was invited by Mr. Ronald Kalema, the Mayor of Katabi Town Council, to give a speech on how to live a healthy life and to give hope to elderly people. Bhante, together with volunteers at the Uganda Buddhist Centre, arrived at Bethel Freedom Tabernacle Church in the afternoon, where the workshop was organized. Bhante encouraged the elderly to eat healthy foods including fruits and vegetables, and drink enough water. Furthermore, he emphasized that eating on time is very helpful for the body.

In his talk, Bhante also inspired his audience to learn and practice meditation whenever they have time. Meditation helps to clear your mind from all the stress, worries, anxieties, and other mental illnesses.

One of the participants who once worked at the local council had seen Bhante before when he was seeking a signpost license. He said that at that time, he feared him because of the way Bhante was dressed. He wondered whether Bhante was a traditional healer or a witch doctor. Just to get rid of Bhante, the officer and his colleagues charged Bhante a little money for the license. Many of the participants were shocked by Bhante's attire, but after getting closer to him, and listening to his wisdom, they gained more confidence and appreciated him for giving them the time to talk.

Mr. Kirabira, also a participant, had been to the Uganda Buddhist Centre. He appreciated Bhante and stated that he had finished reading the book he got at the temple during his visit. He requested more books so that he could further enrich himself with Buddhist wisdom. The Mayor encouraged the audience to always keep seeking knowledge and keep healthy.

As a token, Bhante offered 1000 kgs of maize flour, each elderly going away with 10kg. This act of kindness was extolled by the Mayor and the elderly group. They began to relate to Bhante and came to see Bhante as not just a traditional healer, but a fountain of knowledge, compassion, kindness, and wisdom.



Mayor Kalema delivering a speech



Beneficiaries of the food drive event

DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR JAYANTI

**Commemorating the 131st Birth Anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
Leader, Visionary, Scholar, and Proponent of the Buddha's Teaching**

The event was conducted on April 14 and was sponsored by Mr. Panchasheel, one of our current volunteers from India. He offered meals to over 60 people both the monastics and the lay followers. The event was to honor Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's life and works in the propagation of Buddhism across India and the entire world. On the same day his birth anniversary was celebrated in more than 150 countries worldwide.



Group photo of monastics and meditators

Dr. Ambedkar was deeply impressed by the Buddhist philosophy and eventually embraced it on October 14, 1956, initiating a mass conversion of Dalits from Hinduism to Buddhism.

On the anniversary of his birth and death and “Dhammacakkappavattana Day” (October 14th) at least half a million people gather to pay homage to him at his memorial in Mumbai, India. His message to his followers was: “Educate, Agitate, and Organise!”

Dr. Ambedkar was born in India on April 14, 1891. He was a great economist, social reformer also known as the “Father of the constitution of India”. He advocated for the rights of Dalit communities and led the movements against systemic discrimination based on caste. For more details on his life, please see here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B. R. Ambedkar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B._R._Ambedkar)



Offering flowers to the Buddha on the occasion of Dr. Ambadkar Jayanti, April 14, 2022



Bhante giving blessings over meal offering



Serving novice monks during lunch



The weekly Sunday Meditation and Dhamma Talk

UBC DHAMMA TALKS: PATIENCE

This talk was given by Bhikkhu Buddharakkhita on 10 April 2022 during the weekly Sunday meditation and Dhamma discourse at the Uganda Buddhist Temple. Along with anecdotes translated from the Luganda language, the talk has been adapted for the publication of this newsletter.

There is a Luganda proverb: “Rushing is not an effective fire; if it were, we would use it to burn banana leaves and cook with it.” The premise of this proverb is that dry banana leaves, when heaped together, burn in a huge fire. However, the fire usually lasts for only a short while before it dwindles and dies, and therefore it would not be useful to cook with because of its short-lived nature. This is what rushing or hurrying is like – it is not useful. So we need to be patient. Patience is a high virtue.

There are three ways to have patience: (1) with people, including yourself (2) with life and its vicissitudes, and (3) with the path or practice.

Firstly, we should develop our own ability to stay calm, peaceful, and tolerant. When I was staying in Bolivia in 1999, I had to send emails back home to Uganda. It was imperative that I sent messages home every so often while I was travelling, and this was a really difficult endeavor. The internet was very slow back then and they charged for its usage by the minute. If you had thirty minutes to send an email, about twenty-five were spent waiting for processes to load on the computer. This was very frustrating so all I was left to do was breathe in and out mindfully while waiting.

We will encounter different people in life who will test the limits of our patience. Some will be slower than us, others weaker, others less understanding, etc. Always strive to be patient with these people. Don't be a doormat for people to walk all over, however. Don't just sit there like a vegetable. Give them three chances and if they do not seem to come around, express your thoughts to them. Compassionately say to them, “I have given you a few chances to correct something, but you have not managed to do so. Please understand that this is how I feel about your speech/action, or lack of it thereof.” Always give people a chance to change first, and this will require patience on your part.

Secondly, in life, we will face the 8 worldly concerns: happiness and suffering, fame and disrepute, praise and blame, and gain and loss. Things in life will always be delayed or they will always move too slow for our liking.

When I lived in India in the 90s, letters took at least one month to be delivered between there and England – and that was just one way. It took another month to receive a reply, and that is if your point got across the first time. When the letters took too long to be responded to, you would have to post another letter whose subject was to ask whether the previous letter was received. All in all, it took up to three months to get your point across. Phone calls were quite expensive but another option would be sending a telegram. Every character of the message was charged, including the full stops.

Nowadays, it takes just a few seconds to send an email across the world. The funny thing is that since this is a quick mode of communication, we expect a response immediately. If our email is not responded to in five minutes, we start to worry. “What’s wrong with my email? Am I still connected?” People have grown so impatient. If there’s still no response within a day, we get so agitated.

How long does it take to prepare a cup of tea nowadays? You’ve got a tap with running water and a gas stove. In a few minutes, you have a cup of hot tea. Back in the day, preparing a cup of tea was another task that took a long time. To begin with, you had to go out and fetch water and firewood. By the time you want to start the fire for warming the water, you realize you’ve run out of matchsticks so that’s another trip to the shop. On arriving at the shop, you find that the shop is closed and the shopkeeper has gone out farming. So you had to go to the neighbors to find an ember and carefully carry it to your home to start a fire. Then you had to fan the firewood and blow on it for a while – whatever it took to get a fire. Preparing a cup of tea simply took a much longer process and a lot more effort than it would today. All the shortcuts for doing things back then are still longcuts in today’s life. Now it only takes two minutes to make some tea. I am saying this because I don’t want these children here to take life for granted. Life is a process. Be patient.

The third way to be patient is with spiritual practice. When we meditate, we often get instructions but we still fall into problems because we want to get good results quickly. This wanting makes us impatient with the practice. The practice is like planting seeds. When you plant a mango seed and it starts to germinate, you don’t pull the seedling for it to grow taller. Mangoes keep their own schedule and you can’t control them. You can’t control the results.

You should meditate like the way hens sit on their eggs. The hens may go out to eat but they always come back to sit on their eggs again and again. They have the intention and they apply the effort to provide warmth to the eggs and create the right conditions for them to hatch. When the time comes for the chicks to hatch, they don’t poke at the eggs themselves. They let the little chicks break from their shells on their own because they have already developed beaks sharp enough to do it. The results just happen on their own. In the same fashion, keep listening to the Dhamma. Keep meditating patiently with good intention while applying the right effort and the results will come automatically.

Today I task you with finding one thing in your life that you are not patient with and try to use that to nurture this quality of patience.

May all beings have equanimity and may all beings be free of suffering and its causes.

The Official Opening of Mabira Meditation Centre (MMC)

The Mabira Meditation Centre is one of the 10 planned satellite meditation centers to be opened across the country. The opening ceremony was attended by people from various backgrounds, and Bhante Buddharakkhita was the Chief Guest at the event. In his speech, Bhante thanked Dr. Juuko for his great vision of creating this Centre, that will house many people from various walks of life to develop in their spiritual journey. To mark his visit and opening of MMC, Bhante planted a tree, Elephant Sugarcane, and it is known to be medicinal in Uganda. The delegation was also led by Dr. Juuko to tour the place where he plans to set up a farm.

The MMC provides a perfect retreat setting for the practice of meditation, yoga, and other contemplative practices. The premises comprise of natural beauty and is surrounded by beautiful trees that make up Mabira Forest. While at MMC, one has a chance to hike through the forests of Mabira sip the waters of its naturally endowed spring well. The current accommodation consists of superb rooms with private bathrooms. The first house at the Centre was named House of Mystics.

MMC was established by Dr. Juuko Ndawula and Bhante Buddharakkhita. Dr. Juuko is a longtime friend of Bhante, since they studied together in India in the 1990s. Dr. Juuko is a practitioner of alternative and complementary medicine and he is the founder of International Research Institute of Alternative and Complementary Medicine (IRICAM) in Kitintale, Kampala.



Living quarters for meditators/visitors at The House of Mystics





Dr. Juuko delivers a speech



Bhante Buddharakkhita on tour of the premises



Dr. Juuko and Family receive a gift from Bhante Buddharakkhita



Bhante plants the 'Elephant Sugarcane' at the site



Watering the 'Elephant Sugarcane'

Donations from Vietnamese Devotees



Devotees meditate before gift offering

The UBC was honored with a visit from a group of Vietnamese supporters from Kampala. They gave gifts to all the residents and staff of the UBC. The gift package contained (1) a flannel facecloth (2) a tube of toothpaste, and (3) a bar of soap.

As always, the UBC is thankful for the generous donations from its supporters.

Anyone who wishes to offer their support is welcome to contact the centre as per the details provided at the beginning and tail end of this newsletter.



Vietnamese guests offer gifts to UBC residents



Vietnamese guests and devotees

PUBLICATIONS



Bhante Buddharakkhita is a renowned author of several books, including *Planting Dhamma Seeds: The emergence of Buddhism in Africa*. We have decided to make them accessible to our dear community, so you are happily invited to download them on our website at <https://ugandabuddhistcenter.org/publications/>

If you enjoy Bhante's books, please feel free to spread the word about our work and help plant Dhamma Seeds across the world.

Drop by Drop

Practicing the Dhamma in Daily Life

Someone once asked the Buddha, "What do you and your disciples practice?" and he replied, "We sit, we walk, and we eat."

The questioner continued, "But Sir, everyone sits, walks, and eats." The Buddha responded, "But when we sit, we know we are sitting. When we walk, we know we are walking. And when we eat, we know we are eating."

HOW TO DONATE

1. For donors in the USA

1. Please write out the Check/Cheque to :

Universal Virtue Buddhist Charities

2. Please Write in the Memo of the Check :

Dana for Uganda Buddhist Centre or Buddharakkhita

3. Please take a photocopy of the check and send it via email: ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com

4. Please Mail the check to the physical address below:

Universal Virtue Buddhist Charities

C/O Hung Pham

**10222 Larson Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92843
USA**

2. Donate Online

Please follow the links below to make a secure donation online:

<https://ugandabuddhistcenter.org/donate-now/>

<https://dashboard.flutterwave.com/donate/hd1cwapst9gc>

Please note that this payment gateway accepts 3D secure transactions only. This means that only cards that are Verified by Visa, and Mastercard secure code will be accepted. If your donation doesn't go through, kindly contact your bank to ensure you are secured. Thank you!

3. Wire Transfer

Beneficiary's Bank Details:

Bank Name: *Orient Bank Limited*

Bank Account Number: *41261302010523*

Bank Account Name: *Uganda Buddhist Centre*

Swift Address: *ORINUGKA*

Bank Address: *Orient Plaza, 6/6A, Kampala Rd*

Gratitude to All Our Supporters

UBC activities are made possible by many supporters from around the world. Therefore, we are eternally grateful to the Buddhist Global Relief of USA, Huong Tu Lovingkindness Foundation USA, Buddhist Fellowship of Singapore, Tan Teo Charitable Foundation, and all our beloved donors from around the world.

We Need Your Support

How can I support the Uganda Buddhist Centre?

- Give funds for the construction of the first Buddhist-founded secondary school
- Volunteer as a teacher for our schools
- Volunteer at UBC in many other activities





*May all beings be well.
May all beings be happy.
May all beings be peaceful.*



Uganda Buddhist Centre
Plot 31, Bulega
Garuga Rd, Entebbe
P.O Box 898, Entebbe

+256(0) 775-019-180
ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com
www.ugandabuddhistcenter.org