



UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER



UBC's Kampala Branch: A Promising Start for Sharing Buddha's Teachings and Practices

The new Uganda Buddhist Centre (Kampala) was opened with a beautiful dedication led by Bhante Buddhakhita on 1st January this year. We circumambulated the single story house in the suburb of Bunga three times, and then visited every room before having a simple ceremony in the living room.

The opportunity to rent this building came up rather suddenly, and so we then had to decide quickly how to make use of it to start sharing the teaching and practices of the Buddha for the benefit of people in Kampala. It was decided that we should start initially with a programme on Saturday afternoons, as we thought people might be available in their busy lives at this time.

After some discussions, it was decided to have a programme with three parts; yoga, followed by meditation followed by a dharma talk and discussion, each lasting 40 minutes with five minute breaks between each part. This has worked well and the sessions flow very naturally into each other. There is a clear emphasis on open and participatory activities based on the teachings of the Buddha.

I have been very pleased to be involved in the establishment of this programme and feel we have made a good, if small, start in making the dharma available for people in Kampala. The numbers have been anything from around eight to



twenty people, but it has been a very valuable period of experimenting and learning before we start advertising the programme more widely.

The yoga has been led mainly by Julia and Julie, with an emphasis on the Hatha tradition, which encourages calmness and a focused sense of being fully present. This is a very good preparation for the meditation sessions in which we have explored some of the main traditional practices including mindfulness of breathing, metta bhavana (the development of loving kindness) and the six element practice (reflecting on the components of our being). The meditations have provided a good basis for the dharma talk and discussion, although these two could be done the other way round, which we may try in the future.

There has been a strong atmosphere of friendliness and spiritual enquiry in all the sessions, and Julie and I were rather sad to leave our last session on 11th March before returning to the UK for three months. We are confident that that this programme will continue to develop and grow and that other classes and events can be added to the programme as the year progresses and the new Kampala centre becomes firmly established.

Thanks and appreciation to all the pioneers of the Uganda Buddhist Centre in Kampala and we look forward to being with you again from June.

Stephen and Julie Wyard

SUPPORTING UGANDA BUDDHIST CENTRE

UBC activities are made possible by many supporters from around the world. Therefore, we are eternally grateful 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.

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