宣公上人--禪定要訣頌

Verse on Keys to Chan Meditation
Composed by Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

Master Hsuan Hua's Chan Meditation Instruction
Contemplate in silent meditation, as in dhyana;
Maha prajna bodhi sprouts.
Cultivate and nourish with diligence and vigor.
Awaken to the Patience of Non-production,
Arriving at the Dragon Flower.
After Hui Neng took leave of the Patriarch, he set out on foot for the South. In two months he reached the Ta Yü Mountains. The Fifth Patriarch returned to the monastery but for several days he did not enter the hall. The assembly was concerned and went to ask, “Has the Master any illness or problem?” “There is no illness,” was the reply, “but the robe and Dharma have already gone south.” “Who received the transmission?” they asked. “The Able One obtained it,” said the Patriarch. The assembly then understood, and soon several hundred people took up pursuit, all hoping to steal the robe and bowl.

The Sixth Patriarch left the Fifth Patriarch, no longer attending upon the High Master or making offerings to him. He walked south from P’ing Mao Mountain and in a little over two months, he finally reached the Ta Yü mountain range which borders between Nan Hsiung and Kuang Tung.

The Fifth Patriarch returned to his room. For many days he did not go into the hall to speak Dharma or take his meals. The assembly was curious. “High Master,” they said, “are you beset with any illness or worries?”

“I have no illness, but the robe and Dharma have already gone south. You may all disperse,” said the Fifth Patriarch, “because I no longer have the Buddhadharma here. I am going to retire.”

“Who received the transmission?” they asked. “The Able One,” said the Patriarch. “The one who has the highest ability and skills received it.”
大家就知道是六祖惠能得此衣法。因當時有些人並不是很愚蠢的，像其中有一名叫法如師（五祖十大弟子之一，五祖囑十大弟子各據一方而爲法主）。他一聽說能者得之，就明白而說：「就是那廣東獠獠盧惠能居士，他得到了，這真奇怪！」

眾人聽後就反對說：「不行不行，怎可傳法給他，我們跟隨您那麼久，怎不傳法給我們？大概五祖腦筋不太靈敏了，我們大家從後追，去搶回衣缽！」於是，就有數百人來追赶六祖，想搶回衣缽，由此可見其勢力之大。

一僧俗姓陳名惠明先是四品將軍，性行粗馴極意參尋。衆人先趨及惠能。惠能擲下衣缽於石上云。此衣表信。可力爭耶。能隱草莽中。惠明至提掇不動。乃喚云。行者行者。我爲法來。不爲衣來。

這時，在百人中，有一位和尚，俗姓陳名叫惠明，在家時曾做到四品將軍，性情粗野，一點學識也沒有，一開口就罵人，若不聽就動手打。此人力大，幾百斤的石頭可一拳打碎，因他有此本領，故做到四品將軍。他生稟特異——「飛毛腿」，一天可跑二百里路，而普通人一天最多只可走一百里路。他一心一意要搶回衣缽，心想誰力量大就是誰的。他尤其走得快，走在眾人前面，眼看就要追到惠能了。

When this announcement was made, those in the assembly who had keen intelligence immediately knew that it was Hui Neng who received the transmission. One of them was Dharma Master Fa Ru. He was one of the Ten Chosen Disciples of the Fifth Patriarch. Before the Fifth Patriarch entered Nirvana, he gave instructions to these ten disciples, telling them, “Each of you go to a different direction and be a Dharma Host.” But now, when Fa Ru heard the Fifth Patriarch say that the Able One had obtained the transmission, he cried out, “No! Not that southern barbarian! This is most unorthodox!” The “Able One” refers to Hui Neng: “Able” (neng) was his name.

Word spread, and soon everyone knew. They all objected violently. “No! No! How could you give it to him?” they said. “We have been following you for so many years. Why didn’t you give it to us?” they demanded. They thought to themselves, “The Patriarch’s brain must be addled. How else could he give the Dharma to such a hick? We should get back the robe and bowl, even by force!” Several hundred people ran in pursuit of Hui Neng.

One Bhikshu, Hui Ming, a coarse-natured man whose lay name was Chen, had formerly been a fourth class military official. He was intent in his pursuit and ahead of the others. When he had almost caught up with Hui Neng, the latter left the robe and bowl on top of a rock, saying, “This robe and bowl are tokens of faith. How can they be taken by force?” Hui Neng then hid in a thicket. When Hui Ming arrived, he tried to pick up the robe and the bowl, but found he could not move them. Then, he cried out, “Cultivator, Cultivator, I have come for the Dharma, not for the robe!”

Among the hundreds in pursuit was Bhikshu Hui Ming. He was unrefined and uneducated. Whenever he opened his mouth, it was to scold someone, and if they refused to listen, he would beat them up. With one blow, he could smash a rock of several hundred pounds. It was his herculean strength that enabled him to become a fourth class army officer before he became a monk. Hui Ming had one peculiar trait. He was feather-footed, figuratively speaking. While an average man could traverse thirty miles per day, he could do sixty miles a day. Hence, he was way ahead of all others in pursuit of Hui Neng. As he flew along, his mind raced, “I’ll get the robe and bowl and then it will be mine! It should belong to the strongest man.”
When Hui Neng saw this big, burly pursuer closing in, he was a bit frightened. Although he had obtained the Dharma, he had barely started to cultivate and did not yet have great spiritual power. He shouted into empty space, “This robe and bowl are symbols of faith. How can they be taken by force?”

Hui Neng then hid himself in the thicket. When Hui Ming saw the robe and the bowl on top of the rock, he grabbed for them. Strangely, he could not move them any way he tried. Why? This indicates that there were Dharma protectors—gods, dragons, and others of the eight divisions present guarding the robe and bowl. His initial intend was to grab the robe and bowl and run. When he realized the futility of his effort, it dawned on him that these items could not be obtained by force. As a result, he decided to request Dharma from the Sixth Patriarch. He called out, “Cultivator, Cultivator, I come for the Dharma, not for the rob and bowl.”

Had he truly been seeking the Way, Hui Ming would not have first tried to grab the robe and bowl. He would have immediately requested the Dharma. He would have first cried out, “Cultivator, Cultivator, I have come for the Dharma, not for the robe!” Don’t you think this is a logical deduction? (To be continued.)

7/4 長堤聖寺國慶音樂會剪影 Snapshots of Music Concert at Long Beach Sagely Monastery on July, 4th.
Today I will introduce to all of you another high Sanghan of the Jin Dynasty from Chang An. His name was Dharma Master Dao Heng. He was the same dharma master who ordered Dharma Master Hsien to leave the monastery. Dharma Master Dao Heng was a native of the Nan Tien district. Once, when he was nine years old, he was playing with other children alongside a road. At that time, there was a hermit called Jang Jung who saw the boy and noted something unusual. He sighed, “The countenance of this little child is unlike others. He is out of the ordinary. If he chooses to remain a layman and become a government official, he will definitely be a high official. If he chooses to leave the home-life and cultivate the Way, he would surely be able to vastly propagate Buddhism. He would make an exceptional contribution to Buddhism. Alas, I am now old and I won’t be able to witness what will become of him in the future!”

When Dharma Master Dao Heng was still quite young, unfortunately, both his father and mother passed away. He was then under the care of his step-mother. Although she was his step-mother, he was very filial to her.
Most people knew that this Dharma Master was a filial son before he left the home-life.

Although his household was poverty-stricken and had no money, Dharma Master Dao Heng possessed the art of painting. He would paint pictures and sell them in the city. With the money he earned, he would provide for his step-mother. When he was twenty years old, his step-mother also passed away. He then observed filial piety by the side of her grave. During that period, he was very fond of reading and chanting the Buddhist sutras. Very often, he would continue his reading for two nights straight without any sleep! After his mourning period was over, he left the home-life. The Master thoroughly penetrated and understood without obstruction the principles of the Buddhist sutras. He was erudite and read many sutras. As a result, his wisdom and intelligence were greatly enlightened.

When Dharma Master Kumarajiva arrived at Chang An in China, the Master drew near to him. Upon seeing the Master, Dharma Master Kumarajiva was extremely happy. After Dharma Master Kumarajiva translated the sutras, Dharma Master Dao Heng would help polish and thoroughly endorse his translations. To thoroughly endorse means to review the sutra text and see how the contents were translated.

Dharma Master Dao Heng had a fellow classmate named Dharma Master Dao Biau who was also very talented. He shared the same reputation as Dharma Master Dao Heng. At that time, Emperor Yao Hsing of Yao Chin, upon seeing that both Dharma Masters Dao Heng and Dao Biau had outstanding countenances, and even more, that their intelligence, wisdom and eloquence of speech were far superior to others, this Yao Hsing of Chin produced a delusive idea about the two masters. “If these two can help me govern the country, as they are both capable of doing, my country will surely be governed well. Don’t you think so?” Hence, he issued an imperial edict ordering his prime minister to exhort both masters to return to lay-life and serve the government as officials. Now you can see that

順，所以一般人都知道，這裡有一位法師沒出家以前就是孝子。

他家裡很貧窮，沒有錢，道恆法師他會畫畫，他就自己畫些畫，拿到城市去賣，得到一點錢，拿回來養他的後母。到他二十歲的時候，他的後母也死了，他就在墳上守孝。在這時候，他非常高喜讀誦佛的經典，他讀誦佛經典，常常啊！接连兩個晚間也不睡覺，不睡覺來閱讀佛經。守孝之後，他就出家了，他對佛經的道理非常通達無礙，非常明瞭，他經典讀了很多，所以他的智慧聰明也就大開了。等鴻摩羅什法師到中國長安的時候，他就去親近鴻摩羅什法師，而鴻摩羅什法師一看見他，就非常的歡喜。鴻摩羅什法師所翻譯出來的經典，道恆法師就幫他來潤色，幫著他來詳定，詳定就是看這個文字翻譯得怎樣。

道恆法師有一位同學，叫道標法師，也是很有才能的，和道恆的名譽是一樣的。在這個時候，姚秦的皇帝姚興，他因爲見到道恆和道標這兩位法師，相貌與眾不同，他們的聰明，智慧，辯才都是比他人要高超。秦主姚興就打他們兩個人的妄想，「這兩個人如果幫著我來治國，他們有這樣的本事，你說我的國家不會能治好嗎？」於是就下了一道詔書，要這個尚書令，就是好像丞相的官，勸他們兩個人還俗，幫著政府來做官。你看這兩位修
these two cultivators had so many demonic obstacles. The emperor had forced them to return to lay-life, to renounce cultivation, and to serve as officials. He said, “Since both of you are so talented, why solely leave the home-life and cultivate? You can be a government official. On one hand, you can help govern the country; on the other hand, you can also cultivate. It is far better than being a left-home person!”

Both Dharma Masters Dao Heng and Dao Biau then wrote a declaration to the emperor. They said, “We have both left the home-life to cultivate the Way when we were young. We clearly comprehend the Buddhadharma. However, we know nothing about mundane worldly dharmas. You have asked us to serve as officials, but basically we have no idea how to become such. We only request that the emperor continue to allow us to cultivate as left-home persons. That will be the best.”

These two persons left the home-life to become dharma masters. They were beloved and highly regarded by the emperor who wanted to appoint them as officials. For ordinary people who covet fame and fortune, being a high official obviously carries more power than being a dharma master, and they will surely change their course. However, these two dharma masters declined the offer. This is exactly what Mencius had said, “Being a great hero, one does not indulge in wealth and honor.” Even if one achieves the status of fame and glory, yet one is not confused and immoral. One does not covet nor become engrossed greedily in wealth and honor. “Being a great hero, one is unmoved by poverty and low status.” Even when one is poor and lowly, one will not be influenced to change. Change means to move. It refers to changing one’s course and vow. One’s mind remains unmoved. “Being a great hero, one does not yield to force.” What is this force? It is the force of oppression. In the face of oppression, do not succumb. This is being unconquerable. Both Dharma Masters Dao-
以說是，「富貴不能淫，貧賤不能移，威武不能屈」，夠上這句話的讚美。

那麼姚興叫他們兩位不要修行，去做官去，他們兩位不聽他的命令。他又寫了一封信給鳩摩羅什法師，叫鳩摩羅什法師勸他們兩位還俗，不要做出家人。這個姚興專門破壞出家人修行，他看法師這麼有道德，他就想叫他做官去，那麼他們兩位也不去做。所以他給鳩摩羅什法師寫信，鳩摩羅什法師又給他回一封信，說：「你做皇帝的，不應該壓迫人還俗，這各人是各有各的志願；所以帝堯去訪許由，他想把皇帝的帝位讓給許由，許由卻不願意做；漢光武帝遇到嚴子陵，想叫嚴子陵去跟著他做官，可是嚴子陵也不願意做，漢光武帝就隨他便，你現在也不可以強迫這兩位法師來還俗。」以後他還想叫道恆道標去還俗，道恆道標就都跑了，跑到山裡頭去做修行。在晉朝義熙十三年的時候，道恆法師七十二歲，就在山裡頭圓寂了。

這兩位法師有很多的著作，有很多經的註解，又作了很多經的序文，都流傳在這個世界上。

Heng and Dao Biao fit into this saying – “Not addled by wealth and honor, not moved by poverty and low status, not acquiescent to tremendous force.” They really measure up to the praise-worthiness of these words.

Emperor Yao Hsing had ordered them not to cultivate and to serve in the government instead. They refused. Then the emperor wrote a letter to Dharma Master Kumarajiva to exhort the two dharma masters to return to lay-life. Emperor Yao Hsing wanted to ruin the cultivation of left-home people. Spotting these two dharma masters of Way virtue, he wanted them to become his officials. When they refused, he wrote a letter to Dharma Master Kumarajiva. Dharma Master Kumarajiva wrote back a letter saying, “As an emperor, you should not coerce them to return to lay-life. Each person has his own ambition. When Emperor Yao visited Hsu You to talk him into becoming his successor to the throne, Hsu You refused. When Emperor Gwang Wu of the Han dynasty encountered Yan Tze Ling, he wanted him to become his official. Yan Tze Ling also refused. Emperor Gwang Wu of the Han dynasty let him go. Likewise, you cannot force these two dharma masters to return to lay-life.” Later on, Emperor Yao Hsing again wanted to ask Dao Heng and Dao Biao to return to lay-life. This time, Dao Heng and Dao Biau fled to the mountains to cultivate. During the thirteenth period of Yi Si of the Jin dynasty, Dharma Master Dao Heng entered nirvana in the mountains at the age of seventy two.

These two dharma masters composed many writings. They wrote numerous commentaries on the sutras and prefaces to the sutras that are still circulating in this world.

(To be continued ..)
Passing Offerings: A Brief Explanation

Passing Offerings is one type of ceremony held in Buddhist monasteries. Its purpose is to pass items of offering in front of the Buddha’s altar. This ceremony was originally performed in esoteric dharma assemblies inside the Imperial Palace. It was later adapted by the Chan School and other schools in Buddhism.

In Pure Disciplines by Master Great Mirror, the chapter on the Observance of the Buddha’s Birthday states, “When the Abbot arrives, he will burn one stick of incense, lay open his bowing cloth and prostrate himself three times. Without folding the cloth, the attendants will stand in line and pass the items of offering.”

In the Observance of Rites and Rituals of Baizhang Zen Monastic Regulations, there are also instructions regarding the passing of items of offering. In Chapter I -- Rites for Inauguration of Imperial Birthdays, it says, “The Abbot commences the offering of tea and hot water. Then the head administrative official hands over the other items of offering to the Abbot one by one.” Under Chapter II -- Expression of Gratitude, the article on ‘Celebration of the Buddha’s Birthday’ says, “The Abbot makes an offering of incense and performs three prostrations. Without folding his sitting cloth, he proceeds to the altar and conducts the offering of hot water and food. His guest-reception attendant hands him the offerings, while the incense-offering attendant places them on the altar.” Normally, this ceremony is conducted in the great Dharma Assemblies. It is also called “Handing over of Offerings” or “Passing Offerings”.

In the present day, we perform the ritual of passing items of offering during the Meal Offering Ceremony. We prepare 108 items of offering such as incense, flowers, lamp, candles, precious gems, fruits, pastry, vegetarian dishes, tea, soup, etc. All these items will be prepared ahead of time and arranged in sequential order on the tables set up at the back of the Buddha Hall. At the start of the Meal Offering Ceremony, the sangha and laity will be standing on both sides of the Buddha Hall. When it gets to the part of chanting the True Words of Universal Offering Mantra (nan, ye ye nan, san bwo wa, fa zhi lai hong), everyone kneels down. Designated volunteers will start the passing...
by handing the items of offering one by one, beginning with the last person in the back of the Buddha Hall, moving to the front. Participants receive the offering in their hands, raise it to eye level, do a miniature half-bow and pass it to the next person. By doing so, they offer a respectful, sincere and grateful heart. Arriving at the front rows, the Dharma Masters will then hand the offerings to the assigned volunteers to place on the altar and arranged properly in front of the Buddhas or the patriarch’s image of virtue. The entire atmosphere is that of tranquil serenity, adorned and supreme.

Nowadays, the passing of items of offering is usually conducted during Ullambana, during the Buddha’s birth-day or during the Patriarch’s memorial days. Basically, the items of offering are categorized under the Ten Offerings¹. They consist of incense, flowers, lamps, incense paste, fruits, tea, food, gems, beads and clothing. In the Ullambana Sutra, it speaks of the Hundred Flavors and Five Kinds of Fruits, which are as follows: 1. Fruits such as dates, apricots, peaches, plums, etc., 2. Fruits such as melons and pears, 3. Shelled fruits such as walnuts, guava, etc., 4. Nuts such as pine nuts. 5. Beans and nuts such as soy beans, small bean, water chestnuts, etc.

1. The ten kinds of offerings mentioned in the Dharma Flower Sutra under the Chapter on Dharma Masters are flowers, incense, beads, incense powder, incense paste, lit incense, silk canopies, banners, clothing, and music. Ordinal Categories of the Great Treasury [a Buddhist Dictionary for ordinal terminologies] combined silk canopies and banners as one category, and added “Putting the palms together” as another form of offering, coming up to a total of Ten Offerings.

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7/4 長堤聖寺國慶音樂會剪影  Snapshots of Music Concert at Long Beach Sagely Monastery on July, 4th.
Venerable Master Hua said, “If your mind can be calm and at peace, and you frequently emanate an air of harmony, that is genuine music.”

Welcoming an auspicious event on a summer day in Long Beach, with melodies and songs, lyrical tunes and chorale. Dharma sounds drifted across, dissipating afflictions along the way. Soothing music wafts throughout, purifying the Saha World.

The 4th of July commemorates American Independence. It is an auspicious day. Long Beach Sagely Monastery hosted an Independence Day Music Concert on July 4, 2008. This created wonderful causal conditions, gathering in everybody through music. Upon invitation, Dharma Master Sure came all the way from Berkeley to lend grandeur to this event. The day’s program included a rendition of songs by the Gold Wheel Monastery Choir, solo piano performances by a number of young people, and er-hu and clarinet performances either in combination or solo. The program was enriched with diversified presentations of arts and culture of the East and the West. It provided a light touch of dhyana bliss and refreshing joy in the dharma.

Long Beach is located along the Pacific Ocean and south of Los Angeles. It is an ideal shelter from the summer heat. Its backdrop of azure sky and sea-green ocean is captivating. Long Beach Sagely Monastery was a Catholic nunnery before it was purchased by Venerable Master Hua in the 90’s. It has a peaceful environment. Blanketed with a carpet of verdant grass, the front yard has a beautiful statue of the Blessed Mother Mary. In the morning and in the evening, devoted Catholics come to offer fresh flowers and kneel in silent supplication, undisturbed. Buddhists and Catholics can inhabit the same area and practice their respective cultivations.
In this place, there is mutual respect and cooperation. This is truly remarkable. Known for his noble spirit, Venerable Master Hua gave us a lesson in respecting and tolerating other religions.

Dharma Master Li and Chin Syan Shr of Long Beach Sagely Monastery led the laity in setting the stage in preparation for this event. The Buddha-hall was adorned with beautiful flowers. The platform was bedecked with a backdrop of red, white and blue, symbolizing American independence and what it embodies.

The Music Concert started at 2 p.m. on July 4th. The Master of Ceremonies, Michael Lo, a disciple of Venerable Master Hua, traveled from San Diego to be part of this important day. Dressed in traditional Chinese attire, he impressed the audience with his fluency in both English and Chinese, as well as his professional manner of carrying out the proceedings.

Dharma Master Sure, Chairman of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, gave a welcoming speech. He talked about the propagation of the Buddha-dharma through music. He praised the Confucian system of teaching and transforming people by means of rites and music. He expounded on the influence of music in moderating one’s nature and refining one’s character. If we can perfect our body and mind this way, and attain self-mastery and liberation, then we have arrived at what Venerable Master Hua called ‘the music of our inherent nature’.

Dharma Master Sure introduced some English Buddhist songs to the audience, who responded warmly by joining in unison. Indeed, having a music concert in a Buddhist monastery is remarkably wonderful, and as rare an occurrence as can be.

Following the welcoming speech, Gold Wheel Monastery Choir delivered a number of songs. With the exception of the first song, ‘America, the Beautiful’, without conflict. This is truly noteworthy. Known for his noble spirit, Venerable Master Hua gave us a lesson in respecting and tolerating other religions.
金輪寺合唱團成立至今十五年，團員近三十人。回顧1993年，南加州的眾弟子於長堤聖寺為上人及其老友楊教授祝壽慶生，在素筵中，金輪寺十多位居士臨時組了一合唱團，並獻唱「盡虛空」，當時上人聽了非常開懷，便說道：「我們也需要有個合唱團了。」由於上人的支持和鼓勵，金輪寺合唱團於是成立，其宗旨於「端正樂風，淨化人心。」將上人的法語偈頌，紮之以清淨莊嚴之樂呂，歌詠讚頌，以音樂傳達佛理，教化人心。

合唱團成立之初，團員不多，也許是佛友們保守害羞，惟恐專業素養不足，皆裹足不前。後來在當家是法師的鼓勵下，團員人數漸多，並延聘了指揮家林明陽老師，作專業的指導。林老師本著「會講話就會唱歌」的原則，指導團員們從呼吸、發聲、節奏、識譜等基本功課做起，每週日下午法會結束後，練唱二個小時。團員們本著以「以音聲作佛事」的心，來參與合唱團。數年之間，團員們已稍能體驗歌唱的技巧及和聲之美，吟詠唱誦之間，法喜充滿。如今，事隔十五年，金輪寺合唱團再次回到長堤聖寺演唱，以歌聲來轉法輪，教化眾生，意義既深且遠。

the rest are songs of dharma and verses of Venerable Master Hua, i.e. Throughout Empty Space, Turning the Dharma Wheel, White Universe, Chance Occurrence, In Praise of Earth Store Bodhisattva, In Praise of Gwan Yin Bodhisattva, In Praise of Amitabha Buddha, Dedication of Merit.

Gold Wheel Monastery Choir came into being fifteen years ago. Calling to mind the birthday celebration in 1993 for Venerable Master Hua and his longtime friend, Professor Yang, about fifteen laypersons from Gold Wheel Monastery formed an ad hoc choir and sang Throughout Empty Space. The Venerable Master was very pleased with the rendition, saying, “It’s about time we have a choir.” With his blessings and encouragement, Gold Wheel Monastery Choir was formed. Its motto – “Refinement of Music, Purification of Mind” – is carried out by transforming the Master’s dharma words into lyrics and blending them with melodious notes, creating majestic pieces of music that convey the teachings of the Buddha, to help tame the mind.

When Gold Wheel Monastery Choir was first formed, there were only a few members. This may be due to the laity’s timidity and lack of confidence in their potential. Later on, with Dharma Master Shr’s encouragement, membership increased. Currently, the choir has about thirty members. Mr. Lin Ming Yang is the choir’s professional conductor. His motivational mantra is “If you can talk, then you can sing.” After the conclusion of the monastery’s dharma service every Sunday, he gives the choir two hours of practice. He starts with the fundamental lessons of breathing exercises, vocalization, rhythm and identification of notes. The members take delight in having the chance to help propagate the Buddhadharma through the songs they sing. They have gradually honed their skills and rejoice in the harmony of unison, filled with the joy of dharma. Now, fifteen years after its initiation, Gold Wheel Monastery Choir returned to Long Beach Sagely Monastery to turn the dharma wheel and help transform living beings by means of music. The essence of this is deep and far-reaching.
This music concert also served as a fusion of art and culture of the East and the West. The duo performance of er-hu and piano was an eye-opener. The multi-talented master of ceremonies Michael Lo played er-hu to the accompaniment of his nephew Jason Lo on piano. Their excellent rendition of the classical piece - *The Gorges of Yen Tze River*, was awesome.

Following shortly thereafter was the piano and clarinet duo performed by Lynn Huang and Jen Chan. They played a modernized edition of a popular Chinese folk song. It was a superb performance. The folk song evoked nostalgia; the modernized edition exhibited creativity.

Afterward, we had piano solos by three promising young performers – Anthony Hou, Vincent Hwang, and Harrison Hsieh. All three are familiar faces in Gold Wheel Monastery either as students in Gold Wheel Sunday School or as participants in the Dharma Service since they were tiny tots. It is a great joy to watch them grow into talented, fine young men. The focal point of their spectacular recital was their rendition of Mendelssohn’s Venetian Boat Song through Chopin’s Nocturne. The audience gave them warm applause. We all look forward to their progression to new heights.

The two and a half hour music concert culminated with the touching rendition of *Dedication of Merit*. All present were filled with the joy of dharma. Without any doubt, this was an auspicious and unforgettable concert. Music is a universal language. It is also a deeply-touching form of art. On this propitious day of the nation’s Independence, we employed music as a vehicle to propagate the Buddhadharma and dedicated this merit to all. We wish the United States of America to remain the epitome of liberty and equality. We hope the world will be a peaceful place for all.
### 2008年11月法會時間表  Schedule of Events – November of 2008

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**◎ 禮拜大悲懺  Great Compassion Repentance 12:30 pm**

2

達摩祖師誕辰
Venerable First Patriarch Bodhidharma’s Birthday
六字大明咒法會
Recitation of Six-Syllable Great Bright Mantra
8:00 am —3:00 pm

9

念佛法會
Dharma Assembly of Amitabha Buddha
Recitation
8:00 am—10:00 am
放生法會
Liberating Life Ceremony
1:00 pm —2:00 pm

16

楞嚴咒 法會
Recitation of Shurangama Mantra
8:00 am —3:00 pm

23

梁皇寶懺
The Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Lyang
8:00 am-5:00 pm

30

梁皇寶懺圓滿
Completion of the Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Lyang
8:00 am-5:00 pm

From November 21 to November 30, 2008, Gold Wheel Monastery will be holding the Compassionate Dharma Assembly – the Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Lyang. All faithful ones are welcome to participate.
**Schedule of Events – December of 2008**

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<td>庆祝阿弥陀佛圣诞法会</td>
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<td>Dharma Assembly of Amitabha Buddha Recitation 8:00 am—3:00 pm</td>
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<td>放生法会</td>
<td>Liberating Life Ceremony 1:00 pm —2:00 pm</td>
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<td>Dharma Assembly of Protecting the Nation and Eradicating Disaster (To be confirmed) 8:00 am—3:00 pm</td>
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<td>祈祷大悲懺</td>
<td>Great Compassion Repentance 12:30 pm</td>
<td>二十月初一</td>
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<td>Dharma Assembly of Protecting the Nation and Eradicating Disaster 8:00 am—3:00 pm</td>
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~常将有日思无日，莫待无时想有时~