

佛光寺紀



Buddha's Light New York



www.fgsny.org

Welcome to the 8th issue of Buddha's Light New York Bimonthly Magazine!

Every two months, we'll be giving you a glimpse into what *Buddha's Light International Association* has been working on! From January to February, BLIA has been contributing towards a mission of equality and social progress around the world.

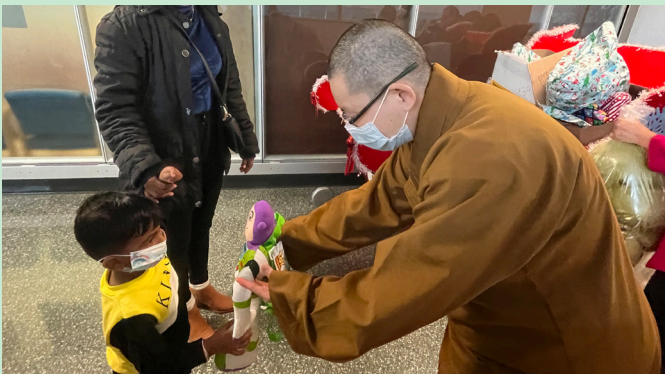
Lunar New Year was a busy occasion for BLIA. For the first time since the pandemic, Fo Guang Shan New York Temple opened its doors and welcomed the community to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit.

To kick off the new year, BLIA was invited to lead a Buddhist prayer at the NYC Council Meeting and the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week.



Fo Guang Shan New York Temple

BLIA in the Community



Delivering toys to children at NYC Health & Hospital Queens



Scouts giving speeches of gratitude to their parents



Girl Scouts learning to cook Thanksgiving Appreciation Dinner



Delivering Laba Congee to seniors at the Nan Shan Senior Center

Executive Board

President: Jenny Chen

Vice Presidents: Kenneth Jin
Frank Yao

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“Auspicious Rabbit Welcoming Spring” Window Exhibition

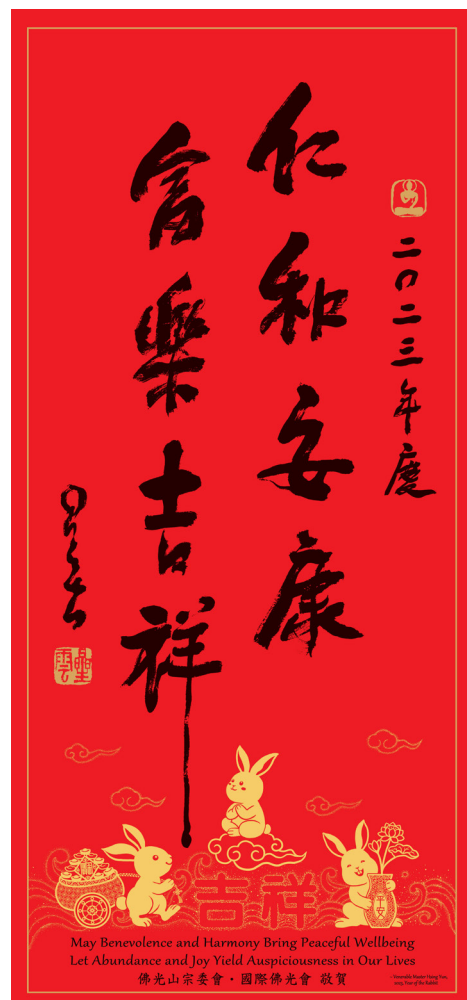
Welcoming the Year of the Rabbit

The Lunar New Year, also called Spring Festival, is a time of change and new beginnings. Many activities during the Spring Festival have the purpose of removing the old and welcoming the new.

In terms of decorations, one of which that Chinese people love is Spring Festival couplet poems. They are often posted on both sides of the doorframe.

The Spring Festival couplets have been implemented by Venerable Master Hsing Yun. In 1996, he wrote “Peaceful and Auspicious” as a greeting for the Lunar New Year. In 1997, “Harmony and Happiness.” In 1998, “Wholeness and Freeness,” and so on. Since then, he composed these new year couplets as gifts to all devotees.

The Spring Festival, being the most important holiday, is infused with cultural essence. Venerable Master Hsing Yun composes the Lunar New Year couplets in hopes to revive the inherent virtue of Chinese culture. While everyone eagerly awaits the Lunar New Year, the couplet written on red paper serves as an inspiration and a complement to worldly joy and delight instead of solely focusing on the spectacle and frivolities.



Credit: Venerable Zhi Sheng
FGS Institute of Humanistic Buddhism

Ven. Master Hsing Yun's 2023 New Year Blessings

A Prayer for the New Year

by Venerable Master Hsing Yun

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

A new year has finally come to the world again.

In the temples, the toll of bells,

At the neighbors', the sound of fireworks,

On the doors, the red New Year's scrolls,

On the wall, a new calendar:

Everything suggests that

All things change from old to new

When a new year begins.

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

At the beginning of the new year, I will look upon

Everything in the past as

A yesterday that has passed away,

Everything in the future as

A today that is newly born.

I would like to express my wishes.

At the beginning of this new year, I wish for:

Harmony in the family and happiness at home;

Contentment in life and good acts to help the world;

Stability in emotions and dignity in character;

The elimination of bad habits

And advances in moral cultivation;

Determination in actions

And compassion in relationships;

Contentment in career and health in body and mind;

Improvement in cultivation and increase in wisdom;

Abundance in Buddhism

And emancipation for all beings;

Steadfastness in society and happiness in people;

Peace on earth and universal rejoicing.

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

In the new year, please grant:

That every word I say may be

Compassionate, kind, and encouraging;

That everything I do may be acceptable to most people

And beneficial to the masses;

That every intention I have may be a blessing to others

And a transfer of merits to them;

That every action I take may be beneficial to the nation

And of assistance to the world;

That I may be willing to contribute my own body

And mind to society;

That I may be willing to share everything I own

With others.

I pray to you, Buddha,

Please bless and support me with your compassion;

Allow me to share in the suffering of others;

Allow me to promote the well-being of society.

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

Promoting Dharma is my domestic duty,

Benefiting all living beings is

My professional responsibility.

I vow to support Buddhist institutions

That cultivate potential;

I vow to disseminate Buddhist sutras and books

That benefit the world and help people;

I vow to participate in the activities of temples

And spare no effort to practice Dharma;

I vow to progress sincerely,

With determination.

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

Please give me strength,

Allow me to progress on the way to enlightenment

wholeheartedly,

Without idleness and without regret.

Please give me faith;

Allow me to surmount the barriers of delusion on the

way to Buddhahood,

And to benefit both self and others.

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

A new spirit infuses the new year;

Allow me to start everything anew!

Oh great, compassionate Buddha!

A new spirit infuses the new year;

Allow me to start everything anew!

Venerable Master Hsing Yun's New Year Prayer Kicks Off the NYC Council Meeting



The first New York City Council meeting of 2023 was held on January 19th in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Fo Guang Shan New York Temple's Venerable You Lin was invited to deliver the meeting's invocation. Venerable You Lin recited Venerable Master Hsing Yun's "New Year's Prayer" to bless all the members and staff of the City Council for the new year.

City Councilwoman Sandra Ung was called to spread the invocation in full upon the record. Councilwoman Ung began by introducing Venerable You Lin as a valued spiritual leader in Flushing and the greater Buddhist community of NYC. She thanked Venerable You Lin for the blessings. She hopes that her colleagues will take Venerable You Lin's words to heart in the new year.



(L-R): BLIA Volunteer Hu Yuezhu, Councilwoman Sandra Ung, Venerable You Lin, City Hall Liaison An Yunrong

Bringing Joy to PS22 Students During the Lunar New Year



Fo Guang Shan New York Temple Venerables and volunteers celebrate Lunar New Year with PS22 students

To welcome the Year of the Rabbit, Fo Guang Shan New York Temple hosted the “Together We Celebrate Lunar New Year 2023” event on January 18th at P.S. 22. Over 700 students and teachers joined in the cultural festivities, which included crafting red envelopes and paper lanterns. Students were also able to try basic Chinese calligraphy and trace the Chinese character for “good fortune.”



Venerable Miao Chu teaches the “Three Good Deeds” to PS22 students



PS22 students making lanterns out of lucky envelopes



PS22 students learn basic Chinese calligraphy

Fo Guang Shan NY Temple Venerables and volunteers read animal stories of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs and played videos to demonstrate the “Three Good Deeds,” encouraging the students to “do good deeds, speak good words, and think good thoughts.” Principal Jennifer Meyer and Vice Principal Katherine Tesson also participated in the celebration and thanked Fo Guang Shan Temple for bringing joy to the children. They look forward to continuing the partnership between the Temple and the school.



Two students showing off their bunny craft



Fo Guang Shan New York Chinese School Principal Emily Wang reads a Lunar New Year story to the students of PS22

Venerable Master Hsing Yun's New Year Blessings Spread at City Hall



BLIA New York President Jenny Chen and NYC Councilwoman Sandra Ung

On January 17th, NYC Council Members Sandra Ung, Julie Won, and Linda Lee co-hosted the Lunar New Year Celebration at New York City Hall. Jenny Chen, President of BLIA New York Chapter, and Frank Yao, Vice President of BLIA New York Chapter, were invited to join the celebration, along with hundreds of representatives of Asian non-profit organizations.

Adrienne E. Adams, Speaker of the NYC Council, kicked off the festivities by welcoming the guests to City Hall and wishing everyone a Happy Lunar New Year. Fo Guang Shan New York Temple presented 200 scrolls of Venerable Master Hsing Yun's 2023 New Year Blessings. Councilwoman Sandra Ung recounted the various new year traditions bringing the Asian community together, such as eating rice cakes and giving out lucky red envelopes. Councilwoman Linda Lee emphasized the growing voice of the Asian community, as there are 5 Asian American Council Members, a record high in New York City. Councilwoman Julie Won mentioned that although there is a rise in anti-Asian discrimination, the community responded with compassion, showing the resilience of the Asian population and the pursuit of the American dream.

Festivities continued with performances featuring the New York Guqin School's Chinese guzheng instrument, traditional Korean dances from the Korean Community Service Center, and traditional Tibetan dances from the Tibetan Community Activity Center Youth Team.

Offering Words of Wisdom for the New Year



Fo Guang Shan New York Temple Venerables and BLIA Members Celebrating Lunar New Year at Queens Borough Hall

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards hosted a Lunar New Year Celebration at Queens Borough Hall on January 20th. Over 200 people attended the event to welcome the “Year of the Rabbit.” Abbess Venerable Chueh Lin, Venerable You Lin, and Miss Daisy, President of BLIA New York’s Flushing 2 Subchapter led 15 volunteers to join the festivities.

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards expressed his excitement in celebrating the Lunar New Year. Special guests included Winnie Greco, Special Advisor to the Mayor, Ebony Young, Deputy Queens Borough President, Megan Yuan, Queens Borough President’s Advisor on Asian American Affairs, and NYC Councilmembers Linda Lee and Shekar Krishnan.

Buddha’s Light International Association, Korean American Family Service Center, and Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY were invited to participate as an event sponsors. Members of BLIA’s Flushing 2 Subchapter handed out vegetarian food, calendars, and New Year Calligraphy Scrolls of Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s blessings. Guests were also able to spin the virtual Dharma wheel to reveal their words of wisdom for 2023. New Year performances included lion dances, traditional cultural dances, and drum performances.



Venerables and BLIA Members giving out New Year Calendars

Community Members Gather to Celebrate Year of the Rabbit



Children decorate Chinese New Year paper lanterns

On January 22nd, Fo Guang Shan New York Temple opened its doors to the community to celebrate Chinese New Year after a 2-year COVID-19 hiatus. Guests were welcome to burn incense, make offerings, ring the lucky bell, and write their wishes on the New Year Wishing Tree. NYC Councilwoman Sandra Ung was also present to join in the Year of the Rabbit festivities.

To celebrate Chinese New Year, all five floors of the Temple were transformed and decorated with lanterns, flowers, fruit trees, and lucky rabbit decorations. The first floor showcased the “Auspicious Rabbit Welcoming Spring” window exhibition. The second floor was dedicated as an area for people to pray to the Buddha for blessings and share their wishes on the “New Year Wishing Tree.” The third floor library featured cultural exhibitions and activities, including calligraphy, lantern making and painting, bunny themed arts and crafts, face painting, and a gift shop.



Fo Guang Scouts perform a paper dragon dance



Traditional Fan Dance



NYC Councilwoman Sandra Ung participates in the festivities

The “Children’s Wonderland” on the fourth floor connected children to traditional stories through interactive games, such as a bean bag toss, ring toss, and lantern trivia. The basement dining hall transformed into a food court with vegetarian versions of traditional New Year foods. The celebration also featured a paper dragon dance, singing and violin performances, and a traditional fan dance.

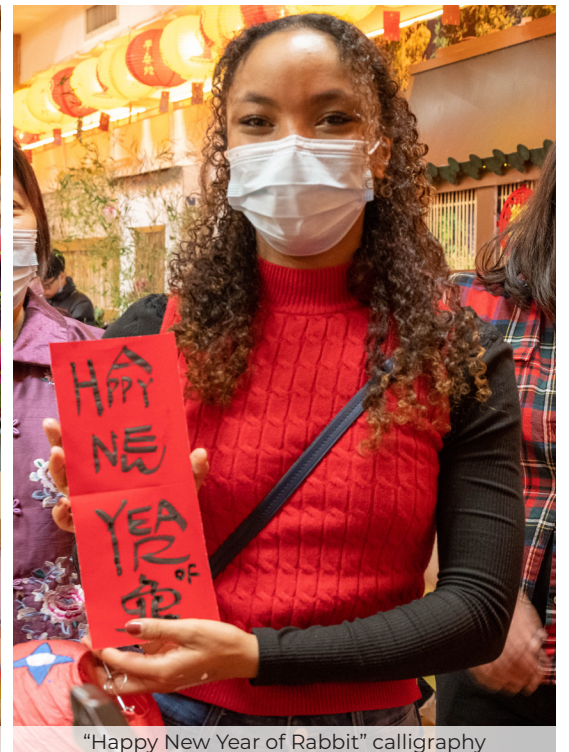
Venerable Master Hsing Yun, Founder of Fo Guang Shan, announced his new year wishes: “May benevolence and harmony bring peaceful wellbeing. Let abundance and joy yield auspiciousness.” Abbess Venerable Chueh Lin also hopes for all to have peace in their heart for the new year.



Abbess Venerable Chueh Lin wishes peace for all in the new year



Third Floor Calligraphy Station



“Happy New Year of Rabbit” calligraphy

Interfaith Leaders Join Together to Promote Harmony in a World in Crisis



Fo Guang Shan Temple Venerables and volunteers presenting Gordon Tapper with Venerable Master Hsing Yun's calligraphy

On February 3rd, 2023, Buddha's Light International Association co-sponsored the 11th annual UN World Interfaith Harmony Week at the United Nations Headquarters, along with founding sponsors United African Congress (UAC) and Give Them a Hand Foundation (GTAH), and co-sponsors Nusantara Foundation, International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), and UNSRC Enlightenment Society. The theme of this year's event was "Harmony in a World in Crisis: Working Together to Achieve Peace, Gender Equality, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Environmental Preservation."

World Interfaith Harmony Week is an annual event observed during the first week of February, after General Assembly designation in 2010. The General Assembly pointed out that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace and established World Interfaith Harmony Week as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith. World Interfaith Harmony Week brings together faith leaders from Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist faith traditions for an interfaith dialogue at the UN, seeking common ground to attain harmony among the faiths and promote a culture of peace.



Ven. You Ren and Abbess Ven. Chueh Lin attended the event



Gordon Tapper, Founder of Give Them a Hand Foundation



Dr. Judy Kuriansky, ECOSOC NGO Representative of IAAP

Moderated by Dr. Judy Kuriansky, Professor at Columbia University Teachers College and ECOSOC NGO Representative of International Association of Applied Psychology, the program kicked off with welcome remarks by Gordon Tapper, President of United African Congress and Founder of Give Them a Hand Foundation. Opening prayers were led by representatives and spiritual leaders of various faiths, including Fo Guang Shan New York Temple's Venerable You Lin, who led a Buddhist chant. Dr. Mohammed Nurhusein, Chair of United African Congress, continued the program with a dedication to Nobel Peace Prize Winner Professor Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan environmentalist and human rights campaigner who dedicated her life to sustainable development, democracy, and peace.



BLIA Volunteer Hu Yuezhu participating in the Buddhist chant



Fo Guang Shan NY Temple's Venerable You Lin



H.E. Ambassador Fanday Turay



H.E. Ambassador Carlos C. Fuller



H.E. Ambassador Jamal Fares Alrowaiei



Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia

The event continued with remarks from United Nations sponsors: H.E. Ambassador Fanday Turay (Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations), H.E. Ambassador Carlos C. Fuller (Permanent Representative of the Mission of Belize to the United Nations), H.E. Ambassador Jamal Fares Alrowaiei (Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations), Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia (Permanent Observer of the Holy See Mission to the United Nations), and H.E. Ambassador Sidique Abou-Bakarr Wai (Ambassador and Chief of Mission of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United States).

Faith and spiritual leaders were invited to address the topics of peace, gender equality, mental health and wellbeing, and environmental preservation. Faith leader participants included Abbott Venerable Hui Dong (Buddha's Light International Association), Imam Shamsi Ali (Director of the Jamaica Muslim Center and President of Nusantara Foundation), Reverend Theodora Brooks (Minister of St. Margaret Episcopal Church), Rabbi Joseph Potasnik (Executive Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis), Pandit Dr. Amarjeet Shastri (Hindu Priest in Jamaica, New York), Dr. Jacob K.



H.E. Ambassador Sidique Abou-Bakarr Wai and Gordon Tapper



The United Nations Singers

Olupona (Professor of African Religious Traditions at Harvard School of Divinity), Reverend Craig Rubano (Co-Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County), Reverend Scott Stearman (Pastor of Metro Baptist Church and NGO Representative of The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), Mr. Carl Murrell (NGO Representative to the United Nations of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States), and Ms. Sally Kader (Founder and President of the International Federation for Peace and Sustainable Development).



Russell Daisey performing "One Faith"

Musical interludes featured "One Love" by Sierra Leonean Artist MDG, "One Faith" by International Composer and Musician Russell Daisey, and performances by Jamaican Gospel/Reggae Singer Ms. Carlene Davis, The United Nations Singers, and the Buddha's Light International Association Children's Choir. The event concluded with a youth leaders panel discussion featuring Jaron Zhou of Buddha's Light International Association, Francis Koroma of the Organization of African Youth, and Melanie Schneider of Columbia University Teacher's College.



Jaron Zhou representing BLIA in the youth leaders panel



佛光山紐約道場

Fo Guang Shan New York Temple



國際佛光會紐約協會

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