

RIME BUDDHIST CENTER

# A BUDDHIST SERVICE

Rime Memorial Service

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

## *Dr. Nora Quiason*

(October 31, 1942-March 26, 2025)



*We never know how high we are  
Till we are asked to rise  
And then if we are true to plan  
Our statures touch the skies*

- Emily Dickinson

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## Shrine Room Etiquette

Respect and courtesy, which are at the heart of spiritual disciplines, are not merely superficial acts but rather mindful practices that can lead to the development of bodhisattva actions. This awareness can guide our attention to detail in showing respect, whether it's towards a lama, in a shrine room, or in our daily interactions. These guidelines are simply rooted in this courtesy and respect.

- Remove shoes at the door.
- No hats in the shrine room.
- Dress modestly; avoid revealing clothes. Bring a shawl to cover your legs if needed.
- Pointing your legs toward a shrine or teacher is disrespectful. If you must stretch your legs, point them away.
- Out of respect, Dharma books and puja texts should never be placed on the floor, stepped on, stepped over, or sat on, but should be placed on a table or cushion.
- A Buddhist practitioner may bow or prostrate before the shrine when entering.

## A Statement on Grief

Grief is a natural process, and William Worden's Four Tasks of Mourning provide a framework for moving through it in a healthy, transformative way:

1. Accept the Reality of the Loss – Recognizing that the person has passed.
2. Process the Pain of Grief – Allowing emotions to be felt and expressed.
3. Adjust to a World Without the Deceased – Integrating the loss into daily life.
4. Find an Enduring Connection While Moving Forward – Maintaining a meaningful bond while continuing one's path.

## About this Service

This memorial service supports these tasks through a blend of familiar Sunday service elements and Amitābha practice, offering comfort, structure, and spiritual support.

- The Eulogy, Reflections on Death, and Meditation help us accept the loss, acknowledging impermanence while honoring the deceased's life and practice.
- The prayers, chants, and offerings provide a means to process grief, channeling sorrow into devotion and aspiration.
- The Refuge Vows and Four Immeasurables reaffirm our commitment to the Dharma, helping us adjust to life without the deceased while strengthening our Sangha.
- The Dedication of Merit and Amitābha Prayers ensure that the deceased remains connected to us spiritually, supporting their journey while allowing us to move forward with love and wisdom.
- Additionally, this service introduces The Fundamental Reflections on Death, guiding us to contemplate impermanence in a way that deepens our own practice and prepares us to meet loss with greater understanding.

By integrating these elements, the service provides a space for remembrance, healing, and a reaffirmation of our path in the face of our communal loss.

*Founded in 1995, The Rime Buddhist Center serves a growing Kansas City community interested in Buddhism. It offers meditation retreats, special interest groups, and programs that show how Buddhist teachings can apply to daily life. We welcome, accept, affirm, and celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community as valued members of our Sangha.*

## Service Begins

*The meditation bell rings three times to signal the start of a brief stabilizing meditation session of 2-3 minutes.*

### **Refuge Vows** (*Everyone, 3 times*)

In the Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha,  
I go for refuge until enlightenment is reached.  
May my generosity and accumulations of merit  
Bring benefit to all beings,  
And may all beings actualize perfect Buddhahood.

### **Four Immeasurables** (*Everyone, 3 times*)

May all beings be endowed with happiness;  
May all beings be free from suffering;  
May all beings never be separated from happiness;  
And may all beings abide in equanimity,  
Undisturbed by the eight worldly concerns.

*(then say once:)*

For as long as space endures,  
And for as long as living beings remain,  
Until then may we, too,  
Abide to dispel the misery of the world.

### **Meditation Session** (*10 minutes*)

*The session starts and ends with a bell.*

### **Seven-Limb Prayer**

Reverently, I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind  
And present clouds of every type of offering, actual and  
mentally transformed.

I declare all my negative actions accumulated since  
beginningless time  
And rejoice in the merits of all holy and ordinary beings.  
Please remain until samsara ends  
And turn the wheel of Dharma for sentient beings.  
I dedicate the merit created by myself and others to the  
great enlightenment.

*Bell rings*

## An Explanation of the Service

### **Preliminaries**

The shrine is opened and an incense offering is made after preceptors enter and prostrate themselves in respect. A prostration is a gesture of respect shown by bowing down with palms together and forehead touching the ground. It is usually done in sets of three, seven, or twenty-one, often with mantras or prayers.

### **Taking Refuge**

Taking the Refuge Vow is a way to reaffirm our commitment. Bodhichitta, which means "awakened heart" or "awakened mind," is the most important motivation in Tibetan Buddhism. It is the wish to ease the suffering of others. This supplication expresses our desire to cultivate bodhichitta for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche said that taking refuge in Buddhism is a way to wake up from confusion and connect with wakefulness. It involves both commitment and acceptance, as well as openness and freedom. By taking the refuge vow, we dedicate ourselves to freedom.

### **The Four Immeasurables**

The Bodhisattva Vow, which is at the core of the Mahayana, is embodied in a verse from Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara "A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life". This verse represents the last of the four immeasurables.

## Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers,  
Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the  
moon

I imagine this as a Buddha field and offer it.  
May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

The objects of my attachment, aversion and ignorance –  
Friends, enemies, strangers, and my body, wealth, and  
enjoyments

Without any sense of loss, I offer this collection.

Please accept it with pleasure and

Bless me with freedom from the three poisons.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIYATAYAMI

*Bell rings*

## The Fundamental Reflections

*Preceptor: The first fundamental reflection is this,*

All: Consider death as inevitable.

*Preceptor: Death is bound to come, so it cannot be avoided.*

All: Life cannot be extended, so we are incessantly moving  
closer to death.

*Preceptor: Even if we are alive, we rarely have time to  
practice. Therefore, the first decision is,*

All: I must practice.

*Preceptor: The second fundamental reflection is this,*

All: Consider that we cannot know with certainty when we  
will die.

*Preceptor: We cannot determine the length of our lifespan;*

All: There are many causes and conditions for death, but  
few causes for life extension;

*Preceptor: The human body is extremely fragile.*

*Therefore, the second decision is,*

All: I must practice now.

*Preceptor: The third fundamental reflection is this,*

All: Nothing but our spiritual practice can help us at death;

*Preceptor: Friends cannot help us at death;*

All: Our wealth cannot help us at death;

*Preceptor: Our body cannot help us at death. Therefore,  
the third decision is,*

All: I will practice not to be attached to anything good in  
this life.

*Bell rings*

## Mandala Offering

In Buddhist practice, supplication prayers are used to humbly request blessings or guidance from a Buddha, Bodhisattva, or spiritual teacher. The focus of these prayers is on cultivating inner qualities, such as compassion, wisdom, and patience, rather than on material gain. During supplication, practitioners invoke the deity's qualities, express gratitude for their teachings, and seek support on their spiritual path.

## The Fundamental Reflections

These three fundamental reflections cut through delusion with stark clarity: First, death is inevitable—life slips away moment by moment, yet we act as if time is limitless, making spiritual practice urgent. Second, death's timing is uncertain—our fragile existence hangs by a thread, so we must practice now, not later. Third, nothing worldly—not loved ones, wealth, nor even our body—can help us at death; only our spiritual preparation matters. Together, these truths shatter complacency, exposing spiritual procrastination as life's greatest risk while reframing Dharma practice as the only meaningful preparation for death's journey. They mirror the Tibetan Book of the Dead's wisdom: what we cling to binds us, while what we release liberates us—transforming these contemplations from morbid thoughts into catalysts for awakening.



**Guided Meditation Session (10 minutes)**

*The session starts and ends with a bell.*

**Supplication to Chenrezig**

You, whose white-colored body is unstained by faults,  
Whose crown is adorned by a fully enlightened Buddha,  
Who gaze upon migrators with the eyes of compassion  
To you, Chenrezig, I prostrate.

**Liberating the Beings of the Six Realms**

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of anger, are born as hell-beings,  
And experience the suffering of heat and cold.  
May they all be born in your presence, perfect deity.

OM MANI PADME HUM

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of greed are born as hungry ghosts,  
And experience the suffering of hunger and thirst.  
May they all be born in your perfect realm, the Potala.

OM MANI PADME HUM

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of confusion, are born as animals,  
And experience the suffering of dullness and bewilderment.  
May they all be born in your presence, protector.

OM MANI PADME HUM

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of desire, are born as humans,  
And experience the suffering of constant toil and poverty.  
May they all be born in the supreme pure land of Dewachen.

OM MANI PADME HUM

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of jealousy are born as demigods,  
And experience the suffering of fighting and quarreling.  
May they all be born in your realm, the Potala.

OM MANI PADME HUM

Compelled by negative karma gathered from beginningless time,  
Sentient beings, through the force of pride are born as gods,  
And experience the suffering of change and falling.  
May they all be born in your realm, the Potala.

OM MANI PADME HUM

**Chenrezig Mantra** *(Everyone sings)*

OM MANI PADME HUM

**Dedication of Chenrezig Meditation**

By this virtue, may I quickly become Chenrezig,  
And the lead every being, without exception, to that ground.

**Supplication to Chenrezig**

This prayer is addressed to Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara), the bodhisattva of compassion. He can manifest in many forms, including four-armed, six-armed, and even thousand-armed. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is believed to be one of his manifestations. This prayer beseeches Chenrezig to bless all sentient beings with the attainment of enlightenment.

**Liberating the Beings**

This Buddhist prayer seeks to liberate all beings suffering in the six realms of existence (human, animal, hell, hungry ghost, jealous god, and god), with special consideration for the human realm as the only one with potential for enlightenment.

**Chenrezig Mantra**

The mantra Om Mani Padme Hum, central to Tibetan Buddhism, is associated with Chenrezig (the Bodhisattva of Compassion). The seed syllables Om and Hum enclose the phrase Mani Padme, meaning "jewel in the lotus," symbolizing enlightenment arising from consciousness. Reciting this mantra embodies the Buddhist aspiration for liberation and compassion for all sentient beings.

**Eulogy**

*To be delivered by a preceptor or person designated by the family of the deceased.*

**Guided Meditation Session (10 minutes)**

*Display of Sukhavatī. The session starts and ends with a bell.*

**Amitābha Prayer**

In the self-appearing realm, the ultimate Akaniṣṭha,  
Is an expanse that teems with rainbow light of intense devotion.  
Here, the embodiment of all objects of refuge, one's own root guru,  
In an extraordinary form and with a radiant body,  
Abides as the essence of Buddha Amitābha.  
With intense devotion, we pray.

**Making Offerings**

By these offerings may Nora and all sentient beings be freed from suffering and attain enlightenment.

Buddha of Limitless Light—Amitābha—turn your enlightened attention towards me!  
Devotedly, with body, speech and mind, I pay homage,  
I offer real and imagined gifts and confess my harmful acts and downfalls,  
I rejoice in virtue, and request you to turn the wheel of Dharma,  
I beseech you to remain, and dedicate all virtue towards enlightenment,  
May all sentient beings attain the omniscient state of perfect Buddhahood!

*Light candle and incense*

Please accept water for drinking, water for washing, flowers, incense, light, perfume, food, and music.

**Supplication to Amitābha**

Amitābha to you I pray that this Child of the Buddha,  
Nora, and all other sentient beings,  
Who have departed from their physical lives and are wandering in the bardo of dharmatā,  
May be liberated from all fear and terror,  
May they recognize whatever appears as nothing other than the natural display of awareness,  
May the support of the sangha provide companionship for them in future lives.  
May the blessings of the teacher continue to lead them on the path of Dharma,  
May their relatives and companions be reconnected with them in their future lives,  
May they never take a rebirth in any other realm,  
But be swiftly reborn in Dewachen, so they may see Amitābha face to face!

**Amitābha Prayer**

This beautiful prayer blends Dzogchen and Pure Land devotion, presenting Amitābha Buddha not merely as an external deity but as the essence of one's root guru—a profound Vajrayana recognition. The prayer collapses boundaries between outer deity (Amitābha), inner guru, and mind's true nature. It is a Dzogchen-inspired Pure Land practice—where rebirth in Sukhāvātī is realized as the here-and-now recognition of luminous clarity.

**Making Offerings**

This prayer merges outer ritual and inner devotion, turning every act—whether lighting incense or confessing misdeeds—into a path to awakening. By seeing Amitābha as both external Buddha and inner guru-mind, we dissolve separation between worshipper and worshipped, realizing that Pure Land is the nature of our devotion itself. This is not just for personal benefit, but for all beings to reach Buddhahood, embodying bodhicitta.

**Supplication to Amitābha**

This prayer is an invocation for the deceased in the bardo state by calling upon Amitābha to help them recognize the luminous nature of their experience and be liberated from fear. It serves as both a reminder of non-dual awareness—that all bardo visions are the mind's natural display—and a heartfelt aspiration for favorable rebirths and ultimate liberation in Dewachen (Sukhāvātī). The prayer beautifully unites devotion and wisdom, offering the departed the supreme guidance: to see Amitābha's radiant presence as none other than their own awakened mind's true nature.

**Amitābha Mantra** (*Everyone, 108 times*)

OM AMI DEWA HRIH

**Dedication of Merit** (*Everyone, 3 times*)

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.

**Aspiration Prayers**

Bodhichitta is precious, may it arise for whom it has not arisen,  
 Once arisen, may it not diminish, but ever grow and flourish.

All difficulties without exception being pacified,  
 With harmonious situations like the treasure of the sky,  
 May the teachings and practice of the Rime tradition  
 Live long and shine brightly!

*The bell rings three times to signal the end of the service.*

**Amitābha Mantra**

This sacred mantra encapsulates the essence of Amitābha Buddha—the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life—and serves as a powerful invocation for purification, rebirth in Sukhāvātī (Dewachen), and recognition of innate wisdom.

Breakdown of the Mantra:

OM – The universal syllable of enlightenment, representing the body, speech, and mind of all Buddhas. It purifies negative karma and opens the mind to blessings.

AMI – A shortened form of Amitābha (Infinite Light) and Amitāyus (Infinite Life). This syllable calls upon his compassionate power to dispel darkness and grant longevity, wisdom, and liberation.

DEWA – Means "divine" or "god," signifying the radiant, blissful nature of the Pure Land and Amitābha's enlightened qualities.

HRIḤ – The seed syllable of Amitābha, representing great compassion (karuṇā) and the transformation of ignorance into wisdom. It is said to instantly invoke his blessings.

**Dedication of Merit**

Dedicating the merit is the closing supplication of Buddhist practices. It is intended to dedicate any merit or benefit attained during practice or meditation to all sentient beings.

**Aspiration Prayers**

These are prayers in which we express a strong desire and intention to develop positive qualities, attain enlightenment, and benefit all sentient beings.