



# Gay Buddhist Fellowship

## Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, San Francisco

November 1995

### GBF Calendar

24-Hour GBF Info. Line: 415/974-9878.

2 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Alan Oliver.

7 Nov. (Tue.), Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the home of Alan Oliver.

9 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm. Location TBA. Call GBF at 415/974-9878.

10 Nov. (Fri.) Classifieds Deadline for GBF Newsletter.

12 Nov., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Speaker: Patrick Bennett, a Buddhist Theravadin monk (and former Trappist monk in the Catholic Church) will share his experiences about his spiritual path as a monk and gay man.

16 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Mark Marion.

21 Nov. (Tue.), Buddhist Anthology Meeting. Info: David.

23 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Lee Robbins.

26 Nov., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Discussion. ♡

30 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm. Location TBA. Call GBF at 415/974-9878.

### Letters

#### The GBF Sangha and Spiritual Practice

I'd like to share some thoughts with members about our sangha. From its inception, there has been an ongoing discussion within the Gay Buddhist Fellowship about how best to acknowledge and affirm our individual practices and at the same time how to create and support our sangha.

There are some GBF members who feel that formal teachers are essential to any real understanding of the Dharma, and others who are skeptical of teachers because of the sad history of power abuse by some in positions of authority in various traditions. Also, there are members who do not consider themselves "Buddhist" in a formal sense, but find a resonance in Buddhist thought and practice that is helpful for them. There are members who are beginners, and then others who have practiced for many years.

I feel these various attitudes and positions are important in the make-up of this organization, and that the tension created by our differences does not signify disharmony. Rather, it gives us as gay people a great opportunity to work with each other, and learn from and support one another. Even though I may disagree with others, I still am able to appreciate their spiritual practice and to care for our relationship in the Dharma. This working together and supporting each other is what it means to be a sangha, to take refuge in the sangha.

From my experience as a Buddhist monk, I feel that we members of GBF are



#### Patrick Bennett to Speak on November 12

The speaker for the November 12 Sunday meeting will be Patrick Bennett. Patrick has been a Trappist monk in the Catholic Church for many years, but recently left that tradition. He will be ordained as a Buddhist Theravadin monk in the near future. He has been doing Vipassana practice for quite some time.

Patrick will share his experiences concerning his spiritual path, both as a monk and as a gay man. We welcome him to our meeting and our community.

#### Next Potluck Nov.17

The next GBF potluck will take place on Friday, November 17, beginning at 7:00 p.m. For the second month in a row, it will be held at the home of Roger Osborne.

These social gatherings provide an opportunity to meet new friends and to get to know other GBFers better, thereby strengthening the GBF sangha. The atmosphere is relaxed, the food nourishing, and the folks friendly.

At this time GBF needs new hosts for the monthly potlucks. Please call Clint Seiter

#### Coming in December...

The December issue of the *Gay Buddhist Fellowship Newsletter* will include the second part of an introductory article on Nichiren Buddhist teachings, and an article by Alan Oliver on GBF's "Buddha and Boundaries" workshop. ♡

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