

Turning of the Dharma Wheel at the Avatamsaka Vihara — A Two Day visit by Rev. Heng Sure and DM Jin Chuan

華嚴精舍轉妙法輪 ——恒實法師、近傳法師來訪報導



By Avatamsaka Vihara

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On June 16th and 17th, 2014, Avatamsaka Vihara in Bethesda, Maryland was delighted to host Reverend Heng Sure and Dharma Master Jin Chuan for a two-day visit. The main purpose of this visit was two-fold: to perform the Transmission of Refuge and the Five Precepts, and to engage in discussion on important topics in Buddhism.

On both days, the program ran from 12:30pm to 9:30pm, and was filled with a variety of events, including recitation of the *Great Compassion Repentance*, the Transmission of Refuge and the Five Precepts, evening recitation and Closing Ceremony, Dharma Realm Buddhist Youth round table discussions, and lectures by Reverend Heng Sure and Dharma Master Jin Chuan.

Day 1: Asian Buddhism and Western Values: Can the Buddha Speak English?

On Day 1 of the program, Reverend Heng Sure and Dharma Master Jin Chuan spoke about the development of Buddhism in the west, beginning in the early 1960s when Venerable Master Hua brought the Dharma to the United States.

Reverend Heng Sure discussed Venerable Master Hua's vision for spreading Buddhism in the west, which consists of four major areas of focus: establishing the Sangha in the west, translating sutras into English and a variety of other languages, promoting education, and facilitating interfaith dialogue. It is through these four missions, that Venerable

二零一四年六月十六、十七日兩天，位於馬里蘭州的華嚴精舍喜迎恒實法師和近傳法師兩位的到訪。這次兩位法師的來訪有兩重目的：傳授皈依與五戒，以及研討佛教裏幾個重要主題。

兩天的法會，從每天下午十二點三十分至晚上九點三十分，緊湊地排滿了不同的活動，包括禮拜〈大悲懺〉、授三皈五戒、晚課、法界佛教青年會圓桌座談，以及兩位法師的講法開示。

第一天的主題：亞洲佛教徒與西方的價值觀—佛陀說英語嗎？

第一天的議程裏，恒實法師與近傳法師講述從一九六十年代初期，宣公上人將佛法帶到美國後在西方的發展。

恒實法師講述上人在西方弘法的志業，包括四大重點項目：建立僧團、翻譯經典、發展教育和促進不同宗教間的交流。經由這四項任務，上人讓佛教超越了亞洲，傳播茁長於世界各地。

Master Hua helped catalyzed Buddhism's growth beyond Asia and into other parts of the world.

With respect to the translation of Sutras, Reverend Heng Sure discussed that Venerable Master Hua emphasized the importance of translating Sutras so that people of various backgrounds could read and learn the Dharma directly from the texts, and not simply through commentary and secondary sources. The two Dharma Masters also spoke about the development of Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU), announcing the exciting news of its forthcoming educational accreditation, and detailing the types of degrees, and coursework that are available through the University.



In addition to the discussion about how Buddhism has developed globally under Venerable Master Hua's direction, was the discussion of how it will develop in the future. Reverend Heng Sure stated that the Sangha and the laity alike are all active participants in the growth of Buddhism. We are not simply passive observers of a phenomenon, but rather can be proactive facilitators and promoters of Buddhism. Reverend Heng Sure spoke of the need to think about ways to make Buddhism less foreign to those who may encounter it. Then through engaging in interfaith dialogue with various other religious and cultural communities, more people will encounter the Buddhadharma.

Discussion continued about how to make Buddhism more accessible to Americans, and especially younger people. Dharma Master Jin Chuan, as a second generation American who grew up in the United States, spoke first-hand about his own experience and interest in Buddhism and his decision to leave home. He spoke about coming to the realization in college of potentially pursuing monastic life, and the challenges he faced in making it a reality.

Dharma Master Jin Chuan, like Reverend Heng Sure, also discussed the idea that there are many dharma doors for which people can come to encounter Buddhism and cultivate a spiritual path. One such dharma door that Dharma Master Jin Chuan emphasized was the practice of filiality. He spoke of his personal experience in observing how practicing filiality benefitted and strengthened his relationship to his parents. He encouraged the attendees, especially the younger ones, to practice filiality, and to see it as a door through which they can encounter and understand the Buddhadharma.

談及翻譯經典，恒實法師說，上人強調經典翻譯的重要，它使各種不同背景的人能夠直接從經文學習佛法，而不需要經過註釋或間接的資料來源。兩位法師也提到法界佛教大學的發展，其中包括在不久將來可獲得教育認證的好消息，並詳細列舉法大提供的學位種類及課程。

除了談論佛教如何在上人的指導下國際化，還討論了將來的發展。實法師說，出家 and 在家眾都是佛教茁長的實際參與者，我們並不僅是被動的旁觀者，而且是佛教的積極推動促進者。我們必須想法子，讓初接觸佛教的西方人不感到陌生，並且經由與其他宗教和文化團體的交流，令更多的人受益於佛法。

接著討論如何使美國人，特別是年輕的一代，更容易接觸到佛教。近傳師以一個在美國成長的第二代亞裔的親身體驗，分享他自己對佛教產生興趣和決定出家的經驗。在大學時代的他，就已經意識到自己出家修行的可能性，以及之後為了實現心願所遭遇的挑戰。



和恒實法師一樣，近傳師也談起佛教的修行有八萬四千法門。近傳師特別強調「孝順」這個法門的重要性。他談及自己如何因行孝而增進和父母的關係，並鼓勵與會者，尤其是年輕人要實行孝道，把它視為一扇通往認識佛法之門。

第二天的主題：交流、音樂、上人生平

訪問的第二天，法師們實踐了宗教交

Day 2: Interfaith, music, and a biography of Venerable Master Hua

On Day 2 of the visit, true to the spirit of promoting interfaith dialogue, Reverend Heng Sure invited Reverend Charles Gibbs, an episcopal priest, to visit Avatamsaka Vihara and to speak to the community. Reverend Gibbs shared his experience working with Reverend Heng Sure and others with the United Religions Initiative (URI), a global grassroots interfaith network bridging different religious and cultural groups in order to cultivate peace and justice in communities around the world.



The evening lecture commenced with Reverend Heng Sure leading the conference attendees in singing *Jin Syu Kung* (School Song), while playing his guitar. The singing added some fresh energy to the program and, for many; it was a unique and fun way to begin a Dharma lecture.

Reverend Heng Sure presented a brief multimedia based biography of Venerable Master Hua later during the evening. The presentation focused on the Venerable Master's lineage and his efforts to bring Buddhism to the west. It described the Venerable Master's relationship with his teacher, Master Hsu Yun (Master Empty Cloud), and the directive that Master Hsu Yun gave Venerable Master Hua to take the Buddhadharma to the west. The presentation detailed the humble beginnings of DRBA, and how it has grown into a global community, including the various DRBA branches currently established all over the world, not simply in the United States.

The night ended with Reverend Heng Sure's encouragement to the attendees to consider the benefits of a plant-based diet. Reverend Sure discussed the hazards of eating meat and dairy, both in terms of individual bodily health and also in terms of the effect on the environment of human consumption of meat and dairy.

By the end of the Conference, the attendees certainly came away with a lot to think about. We learned about ways to cultivate both individually and as a community. The conference infused some great energy into the Avatamsaka Vihara community, and we thank Reverend Heng Sure and Dharma Master Jin Chuan for their wisdom, insight and enthusiasm in making the event a success. ❀

流的真精神。恒實法師邀請聖公會的吉布斯牧師（Charles Gibbs）來到華嚴精舍和大家談談。牧師分享自己與實法師等人在宗教聯合會（URI-United Religions Initiative）一起工作的經驗。宗教聯合會是個全球性的草根性組織，提供世界各地不同宗教和文化團體間的交流溝通，以助於克服彼此的差異和意見的衝突，促進世界和平並維持正義。

那天晚間的講法，實法師先以吉他帶領大眾合唱法大校歌「盡虛空」，歌聲為會場帶進清新的能量，很多人覺得這是一個既獨特又活潑的開場方式。

接著實法師用多媒體幻燈片簡介上人的生平。這段簡介側重於上人傳法到西方來所作的努力，描述了上人與他的老師虛雲老和尚的關係，以及虛老囑咐上人帶佛法到西方來的指示。展示中詳述了法界佛教總會的草創過程，以及它如何成長為一個不僅僅在美國，而且包含分佈於世界各地分支道場的全球性組織。



最後，實法師鼓勵與會者重視素食的好處。法師討論到肉食與奶食的害處，包括對個人健康的損害，以及購買肉奶食品對環境所造成的災害。

法會結束時，大家都獲得許多法寶滿載而歸，我們學到了個人自修與團體共修的各種法門。這次法會為華嚴精舍注入殊勝豐沛的能量，我們感激兩位法師以他們的智慧、內涵和熱情，成就這次法筵盛會的成功。 ❀