

MEDICINE BUDDHA GRATITUDE CEREMONY DURING THE SANGHA SUMMER RETREAT

The Sangha Summer Retreat originates from the Buddha's time. In India, during the three summer months, the sangha either went to meditate in the mountains, by the rivers, or practiced walking meditation in the forest. Due to the heavy summer rains, their alms bowl and clothing were often drenched or washed away by the rain waters. Therefore, the lay disciples begged the Buddha to provide a sheltered place for the sangha; they would then make offerings of food to the sangha so that they could concentrate on their practice and not suffer from the summer rains.

In his compassion, the Buddha set aside a summer retreat period from April 16 to July 15 (on the lunar calendar); during that time, lay disciples offered food, clothing, bedding, medicine, and other necessities of daily life to the sangha so that they could peacefully and vigorously cultivate the Way. During those three months, the sangha would not go out except to take care of their parents and teachers, and to carry out the work of the Three Jewels. This period of time is known as the "three-month summer retreat and 90-days of tranquil living."

Grand Master Wei Chueh, the founding teacher of Chung Tai Chan Monastery, in his compassionate vow to liberate all sentient beings, established the harmonious sangha assembly. He propagates the Buddha Dharma to stabilize and purify the mind of all people. In grateful remembrance of the Grand Master's compassionate efforts, all lay disciples and sangha members sincerely request the observance of the summer retreat period by holding the Medicine Buddha Gratitude Ceremony at all the branch meditation centers of Chung Tai.

At Buddha Gate, from May 22 to September 5, we invite all friends and disciples to join us in the daily recitation of the *Sutra of the Medicine Buddha Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathalgata*.

May the Three Jewels be merciful to us; may the merits benefit all our benefactors above as well as all those in the lower realms. We will dedicate these merits toward peace in the world and all sentient beings, so that all may eradicate all their afflictions, be free from calamities, and attain enlightenment.

Schedule of Daily Recitation of The Sutra of the Medicine Buddha

<u>MON</u>	<u>TUE</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THU</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>	<u>** SUN</u>
6:30 pm	6:30 pm	6:30 pm	2:30 pm	7:30 pm	2:30 pm	4:20 pm
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7:25 pm	7:25 pm	7:25 pm	3:25 pm	9:30 pm	3:25 pm	5:30 pm

**Sunday except monthly events on 6/27, 7/25, 9/5