

II

ENGLISH GENERAL SERVICE

1. Prelude
2. Gatha
3. Repentance
4. Aspiration
5. Homage (Vandana)
6. Ti-sarana
7. Invocation
8. Three Treasures
9. Atthagiko Maggo (Eightfold Path)
10. Sutra Chanting (The Heart Sutra)
11. Incense Offering
12. Gatha
13. Sermon
14. Benediction
15. Announcement
16. Gatha "Farewell"
17. Postlude

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ENGLISH GENERAL SERVICE

1. **Prelude** (All be seated in meditation)

2. **Gatha** (All rise)

3. **Repentance** (In unison)

All evil karmas which I have committed since ancient days have originated from covetousness, anger, and ignorance, in time immemorial, having been perpetrated by my body, mouth and mind. I now repent all of them.

4. **Aspiration** (By leader ; all be seated and gassho)

Oh, Thou, the Buddha, the Supremely Awakened One, the Most Honored One, here are we gathered in Thy presence with deepest reverence and adoration in our hearts. We place our trust in Thee, in Thy Teaching, and in Thy Order, and we do earnestly resolve to be good Buddhists and follow the Holy Path Thou has shown us, so that we may, like Thyself, Attain the happiest and most peaceful realm of Nirvana.

5. **Homage** (Vandana)

Minister: Namō Tassa Bhagavato Arhato Sammasambuddhassa.

Everyone: Homage to Him, the Exalted One, the Enlightened One, the Supremely Awakened One.

6. **Ti-sarana**

Minister : Buddham Saranam Gacchami.

Everyone : I go to the Buddha for guidance.

Minister : Dhamman Saranam Gacchami.

Everyone : I go to the Dharma for guidance.

Minister : Sangham Saranam Gacchami.

Everyone : I go to the Sangha for guidance.

7. **Invocation**

Leader : May the Wisdom of the All-Compassionate One so shine within our hearts and minds that the mists of error and the foolish vanity of self may be dispelled. So shall we understand the changing nature of existence and reach spiritual peace.

Everyone : I pledge myself to strive for the Enlightenment of all beings. I pledge myself to renounce all unholy desires. I pledge myself to follow Laws of Righteousness.

8. **Three Treasures**

Leader : Hard is it to be born into human life. Now we are living it. Difficult is it to hear the Teaching of the Blessed One. Now we hear it. If we do not deliver ourselves in the present life, no hope is there that we shall be freed from suffering and sorrow in the ocean of birth and death. Let us reverently take refuge in the Three Treasures of the Truth.

Leader and Congregation (in unison)

I put my faith in Buddha. May we all together absorb into ourselves the principle of Thy Way to Enlightenment and awaken in our souls Thy Supreme

will.

I put my faith in Dharma. May we all together be submerged in the depth of Thy Doctrine and gain wisdom as deep as the ocean.

I put my faith in Sangha. May we all together become units in true accord in Thy Life of Harmony, in a spirit of Universal Brotherhood, freed from the bondage of selfishness.

Leader: Even through ages of myriads of kalpas hard is it to hear such an excellent, profound and wonderful doctrine. Now we are able to hear and receive it. Let us thoroughly understand the true meaning of Tathāgata's Teaching. Namu Shakamuni Butsu (three times)

9. Atthagiko Maggo

Leader: The Buddha—Dharma is the realization within one's deepest consciousness of the Oneness of all life. For the attainment of this purpose our Lord Buddha left for us to follow the Eightfold Path which is the Way of prime importance. First: Right Understanding.

Everyone: To keep ourselves free from prejudice, superstition, and delusion, and to see the true nature of life.

Leader: Second: Right Mindfulness.

Everyone: To turn away from the evils of this world and to direct our minds towards righteousness.

Leader: Third: Right Speech.

Everyone: To refrain from the pointless and harmful talk and to speak kindly and courteously to all.

Leader: Fourth: Right Conduct.

Everyone: To see that our deeds are peaceable, benevolent,

compassionate, and pure; to live the Teaching daily.

Leader: Fifth: Right Livelihood.

Everyone: To earn our living in such a way as to entail no evil consequences.

Leader: Sixth: Right Endeavor.

Everyone: To direct our efforts incessantly to the overcoming of ignorance and craving desires.

Leader: Seventh: Right Thought.

Everyone: To cherish good and pure thoughts, for all that we say and do arise from our thoughts.

Leader: Eighth: Right Meditation.

Everyone: To concentrate our will on the Buddha, His Life and His Teaching.

Leader: May the sacred presence of Him who said he would abide in His Teaching be our guide. May we follow, with faith and thanks, His Way and tread with unflinching steps this Noble Path until we, too, shall attain Enlightenment.

Namu Shakamuni Butsu

Namu Shakamuni Butsu

Namu Shakamuni Butsu

10. Sutra Chanting (in Unison)

The Heart Sutra

(Pragñā Pāramitā Hridaya Sūtra)

When the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was engaged in the practice of the deep *Pragñāpāramitā*, he perceived that there are the five *Skandhas*; and these he saw in their self-nature to be empty.

“O Sāriputra, form is here emptiness, emptiness is

form; form is no other than emptiness, emptiness is no other than form; that which is form is emptiness, that which is emptiness is form. The same can be said of sensation, thought, confection, and consciousness.”

“O Sāriputra, all things here are characterized with emptiness: they are not born, they are not annihilated; they are not tainted, they are not immaculate; they do not increase, they do not decrease. Therefore. O Sāriputra, in emptiness there is no form, no sensation, no thought, no confection, no consciousness; no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind; no form, sound, colour, taste, touch, objects; no Dhātu of vision, till we come to no Dhātu of consciousness; there is no knowledge, no ignorance, till we come to there is no old age and death, no extinction of old age and death; there is no suffering, no accumulation, no annihilation, no path; there is no knowledge, no attainment, and no realization, because there is no attainment. In the mind of the Bodhisattva who dwells depending on the *Pragñāpāramitā* there are no obstacles; and, going beyond the perverted views, he reaches final Nirvana.”

“All the Buddhas of the past, present, and future, depending on the *Pragñāpāramitā*, attain to the highest perfect enlightenment.”

“Therefore, one ought to know that the *Pragñāpāramitā* is the great *Mantram*, the peerless *Mantram*, which is capable of allaying all pain; it is truth because it is not falsehood: this is the *Mantram* proclaimed in the *Pragñāpāramitā*.

“It runs: ‘*Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi, svāhā!*’ (O *Bodhi*, gone, gone, gone, gone to the other shore, landed at the other shore, Svāhā!)”

11. Incense Offering

12. Gatha (All rise)

13. Sermon (All be seated)

14. Benediction (All remain seated and gassho)

Minister : We surround all men and all forms of life with Infinite Love and Compassion. Particularly do we send out compassionate thoughts to those in suffering and sorrow; to all those in doubt and ignorance; to all who are striving to attain Truth; and to those whose feet are standing close to the great change men call death, We send forth oceans of Wisdom, Mercy and Love.

Namu kie Butsu

Namu kie Ho

Namu kie So

15. Announcement

16. Gatha "Farewell" (All rise)

May this humble merit of reciting the Sutra be extended to all beings! May we attain the Buddhahood together with all beings!

17. Postlude