

## **Buddhism**

### **Visiting a Buddhist Temple**

A follower of the Buddha's teachings is called a Buddhist.

#### **Dress**

Requirements for visitors' dress vary widely from temple to temple (The Newcastle Buddhist Centre does not classify its premises as a temple, but uses the term Centre).

A minority expect smart clothes but the vast majority favour much more casual dress. Loose, comfortable, clothing is recommended for those temples in which members and guests sit on meditation cushions on the floor. (Visitors are advised to call the temple prior to the service for details on seating.) No head covering is required in any Buddhist temple. There are no rules regarding colours of clothing. You will be asked to remove your shoes before entering the shrine hall.

#### **The Basic Service**

There are many varieties of Buddhist gatherings. Some are almost entirely devoted to silent meditation; others bear some resemblance to western worship services, with a sermon by a priest and announcements by the president of the Buddhist temple (Those who instruct and teach at the Newcastle Buddhist Centre, although ordained, do not refer to themselves as either priests or monks). Men and women usually sit together during worship. Elements most common to Buddhist worship are chanting, an incense offering, silent meditation and a sermon or talk by a priest or monk. The gathering may last one to two hours.