

## **SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

Execution Vigil and Demonstration

January 28, 2002

Contact: Diana Lion, 510-655-6169 ext. 307

### **BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP'S SILENT VIGIL**

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship held a silent meditation and vigil outside San Quentin State Prison as Stephen Anderson was executed at 12:01 AM on January 28, 2002.

Approximately 150 members of Buddhist and other religious communities, as well as about 500 anti-death penalty activists were in attendance.

The vigil was held from 8:00 PM until shortly after midnight, when Anderson was actually executed. Anderson was convicted of the 1980 murder of Elizabeth Lyman, a retired piano teacher. On December 21, 2000, the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit denied Anderson's request for a rehearing of his appeal, with a dissent from six of the judges who said, "... [Anderson's] death sentence may well have been imposed, not because of the crime that he committed, but because of the incompetence of an attorney with little integrity and a pattern of ineffective performance on capital cases."

Members of the victim's family strongly opposed the execution.

Diana Lion, Director of Buddhist Peace Fellowship's Prison Project, said: "executing this man just contributes to an ongoing cycle of violence. It does not bring Elizabeth Lyman back; it simply adds more violence and death to an already unbearably painful situation. Now yet another California family must mourn the murder of a family member."

For more information on Stephen Anderson or the vigil, visit the Death Penalty Focus website: <[www.deathpenalty.org](http://www.deathpenalty.org)>.