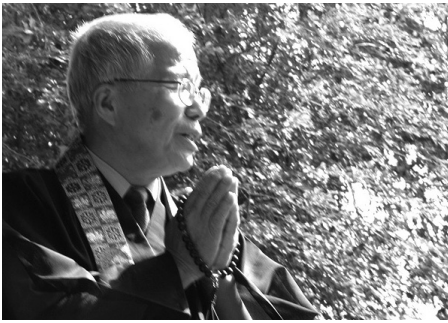




Not Showing One's Back



In the Heavens above and on the Earth below, I alone am the World-Honored One. All that exists in the world is suffering, but I will bring comfort and peace.

Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha

One day, I went to a shopping mall. I saw a toddler. His young mother was slowly walking ahead of him. The child was waddling left and right, touching whatever he could reach. The way he was walking was very unsteady. I was wondering what would happen if he stumbled. The boy suddenly tottered and reeled to one side. I cried out, "Watch out!" The mother looked back and quickly held his hand. But he tried to free himself from his mother as if to say, "I'm okay! Don't worry! I can walk by myself." Obviously, the boy did not realize how unsteadily he was walking. After a few moments of struggling with his mother, he again walked by himself. This time the mother decided to walk behind the boy.

A Buddhist term popped to mind: "not showing one's back." One of the sutras says that the Buddha does not show his back to sentient beings but walks behind them to protect and care for them. If we are strong enough to follow the Buddha,

the Buddha does not need to worry about us and can walk in front of us, showing his back. For the Buddha, however, all sentient beings are helpless, ignorant and so full of blind passions. So the Buddha decides not to walk in front of us but rather behind us, without showing us his back. This is what the Buddhist term "not showing one's back" means. Of course, this is a metaphor, a metaphor telling us of the boundless and unconditional compassion, love and care of the Buddha toward sentient beings. It is also telling us that we are not sages, faithfully following Buddha's path of enlightenment.

But we don't know about ourselves - true self. We think we are like sages who follow Buddha's path diligently. We think we are able to honestly practise precepts and constantly cultivate inner wisdom and follow the path of enlightenment. We do not know about ourselves, about how deep our ignorance is. We think that we are strong and wise enough to be able to follow the Buddha, thinking that we are okay. Like that small child, we resist Buddha's hand. The Buddha, however, knows about the true nature of "us-egocentricity." So, the Buddha walks behind us. Where is the Buddha? The Buddha is everywhere. For me, the Buddha is always behind me. I am weak but comfortable. I am ignorant but peaceful. A pious lady of Jodo Shinshu wrote: "Drawn by the power of great wisdom and compassion; ah, how unsteady are my steps!"

Sincerely in gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Minister
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

花祭り

天気が相変わらずハッキリしませんが、今年も、お釈迦様がお生まれになった日を「たたえ、よろこぶ」花祭りがやってきました。この日を、はじめて「花祭り」と呼んだのは、明治初期の頃に、ヨーロッパに留学した若き仏教徒によるものだそうです。元来は「釈尊降誕会」という、いかにもいかめしい呼び名なのです。母国、日本を離れた学生たちが、さびしさの中でこの日を、より「楽しく、華やかな集い」としたかったのでしょう。仏典には、マヤー夫人が、当時の習慣にしたがって生家に帰えろうとし、その途中ルンビニ一園に休息されたとあります。「折から春の陽はうららかに、アショーカの花はうるわしく咲きにおっていた。妃(きさき)は右手を上げてその枝を手折ろうとし、そのせつなに王子を産んだ。天地は喜びの声をあげて母と子を祝福した」とあります。この世に、そして私たちの心に「智慧と慈悲の光」を与えてくださったお釈迦様のご誕生を、共に祝い致します。合掌 泉康雄

BTSA Minister: Rev. Yasuo Izumi
403.382.7024 • yasuo123@shaw.ca
470-40 St S • Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5
403.327.1260 • www.theBTSA.com

BTSA Notes

Welcome to April, a month popularized in song as a tonic to winter woes and the beginning of a much-awaited spring. It heralds Hanamatsuri, celebrating the birth of the historic Buddha, Siddhartha, when flowers and blossoms make their colorful return. At BTSA, the first Sunday will be Hanamatsuri, starting at 2 p.m., and featuring Joshin Dennis Fujimoto sensei, our guest speaker. The service is combined with the April shotsuki.

The occasion is a special day especially for children and we look forward to their attendance in great numbers to recreate the Buddha's birth by pouring sweet tea over the baby statue housed in the hanamido.

Later in the month, our delegates will be attending the annual general meeting of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada at the Steveston Buddhist Temple. We'll try to have results of that discussion in the next Hikari.

April features BTSA's membership drive and we look forward to the majority of renewals during the month. Please remit the \$100 membership due per person to the temple.

The busy month of March began with the AGM and the selection of directors to the board. Please refer to the article on the meeting elsewhere in this issue for an account.

At the board meeting following the AGM, the executive for the coming year was selected. With the exception of John Dubbelboer who stepped down from the board and as co-treasurer, the previous executive will continue through March, 2016: Akira Ichikawa, chair; Roland Ikuta, vice-chair; Trent Takeyasu, treasurer; and Brenda Ikuta, secretary.

The treasurer will work with the chair and Roy Sassa, director, who agreed to help look after the temple finances. We ask for the membership's forbearance as we fine-tune this new procedure.

The board also:

- agreed to provide BTSA transportation to the World Buddhist Women's Convention in Calgary on May 30 and 31. Discussion are continuing with various companies. The final decision will be announced when made;
- decided to purchase a new laptop for sensei to replace the old one which has been showing its age and wear; and
- was told that the temple request for the Rotary Park recreation center for its picnic in June was approved by the city. More on the picnic will be available in the next Hikari.

Reminder: please keep in mind that the minutes of all board meetings are open to members. They are filed in binders in the board room.

Akira Ichikawa

BUDDHIST Q & A

Q. I was told that when Siddhartha Gautama (Sakyamuni Buddha) was born he walked seven steps. Is this true?

Do I have to believe this? お釈迦さまがお生まれになったとき七歩、歩かれたと言われていますが本当ですか？

A. Buddha's teaching is not a belief system. It does not say that if you don't believe this and that you will be punished. Whether we believe it or not, I think, we must find the meaning implied in these expressions. One of the Four Reliances stated in the Buddha's teaching is do "not rely on the words but rely on the meaning." The words are fingers pointing to the life which is true, real and sincere. Seven steps symbolize the universal aspiration to which all humanity should aspire. In Buddhism, we talk about the six realms of delusion* or spiritual defilements which are the state of being unaware, of lost beings consumed by selfish desires. Amid these delusions, we must listen to Buddha's teaching whose compassion and unconditional love lead to a transformation of true awakening (seventh step of the infant Siddhartha).

*The six realms are: (1) hell through suffering and pain; (2) hungry ghost through greed; (3) animal through stupidity; (4) fighting spirit through anger; (5) human through arrogance and discrimination; and (6) celestial through pleasure and pride (Y.I.)

CHAIR SCHEDULE April & May 2015

**Apr 05 HANAMATSURI/
SHOTSUKI @ 2PM**
Chair: Roland Ikuta
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Apr 12
Chair: Deanna Jones
Audio: Sway Nishimura

Apr 19
Chair: Kynan Gordon
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Apr 26
Chair: Ross Jacobs
Audio: Brenda Ikuta

May 03 SHOTSUKI
Chair: Robert Takaguchi
Audio: Tak Okamura

May 10
Chair: Pat Sassa
Audio: John Dubbelboer

May 17
Chair: Val Boras
Audio: Sway Nishimura

May 24
Chair: Sylvia Oishi
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

May 31
WBWC Convention, Calgary

MC designates: if you are unable to chair on your assigned date or have made other arrangements on your own, please inform Sway Nishimura. Thank you.



April is BTSA Membership Month

See page 4

BTSA AGM 2015 Annual General Meeting

Two new directors--Ross Jacobs and Sheila Oishi--were added to the board, along with three returning directors--Val Boras, Roy Sassa and Trent Takeyasu--at the 2015 BTSA annual general meeting on Mar. 1. John Dubbelboer who served as temple treasurer for the last four years decided not to seek re-election.

The AGM also passed two resolutions, one suspending the Alberta Buddhist Conference in Calgary for 2015 and another not to have tea and refreshments after each Sunday service.

The AGM, held after the shotsuki service for March, agreed to overlook the ABC for the year because of the Calgary temple's involvement with the 15th World Buddhist Women's Convention in May.

The AGM also voted to serve tea and refreshments only following the monthly memorial service (usually the first Sunday of the month) on a trial basis through the summer break.

Among the reasons given for this change were the difficulty of maintaining the weekly snacks in addition to funerals, events and the three major holidays (sandai hoyo); and the tendency for the same members to shoulder the responsibility each week. The membership will be canvassed after the summer break to assess the change and to decide on the next move.

In other matters, the AGM received reports from the chairman, the treasurer, the minister, and various committees. All are available for scrutiny at the temple, along with the 2014 review engagement from Moriyama & Co. The latter is also available on the temple website.

The AGM thanked John Dubbelboer for his fine and tireless work during his tenure and welcomed his return whenever he felt refreshed and willing to resume the position. Thanks very much, John.



Jan Okamura addressing the AGM on Mar. 1. About 40 members were in attendance.

Fujimoto Sensei at Hanamatsuri April 5, 2 p.m.

Joshin Dennis Fujimoto, resident minister of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple in Ontario, OR, is the guest minister at the BTSA Hanamatsuri on Apr. 5 at 2 p.m.

The celebration, one of three major holidays (sandai hoyo) for Jodo Shinshuists, observes the birth of the historic Buddha. The service will be combined with the monthly memorial service, and will be followed by a supper.

Fujimoto sensei was born in Tokyo in 1952. In 1953, his family moved to the United States. He received his BA from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1974; his MA from the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, in 1980; his Tokudo ordination in 1981; and his Kyoshi ordination in Kyoto in 2004. Kaikyoshi status was received in 2005.

He is now in his 10th year at the Idaho-Oregon temple, his first ministerial assignment. In the previous 22 years, Rev. Fujimoto was the owner of Wood & Stone, and the principal designer for The Jigokumon Collection. He designed and created sculptural art pieces, primarily of cast stone or metal.

Here are some of sensei's reflections on various matters:

ON HIS SCULPTURES: It is my hope that my sculptures have a settling presence and exude a meditative calm. In this busy life, perhaps they can serve as a sign, a reminder to stop and breathe.

ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS: I look upon the creative process as a form of meditation. The end sculpture is a reflection on the human struggle towards enlightenment.

ON BUDDHISM: Buddhism encourages its followers to strip away the frivolous; to recognize and move away from the relative world of material gain and personal pleasure, towards an awakening to the absolute. The Buddhist life is to walk this path from relative to absolute and to help others along the way.

Spring Chow Mein Supper - May 2

This spring's annual chow mein take-out supper is scheduled for May 2 and a call has gone out to all members for their assistance. Our twice-a-year suppers raise funds that help keep the temple running smoothly and have become well-known in the community.

Two thousand tickets--at \$12 for each supper--were distributed at the last mein-making session on Mar. 28, and have sold quickly. Those who haven't sold their allotments before the end of April are asked to notify their toban leaders so they might be re-distributed to those seeking more tickets.

All members are requested to assist the preparations on May 1, and during the supper the actual the following day. Please bring your favorite knives and cutting boards during the preparation day to supplement those at the temple.

Our thanks to Jan Okamura who agreed to coordinate the spring supper.



Glen Tanaka, left, and Minoru Yoshida stack take-outs during the 2014 spring supper in this file photo.

Membership Month Reminder

April has been designated as membership renewal month and BTSA is gently reminding everyone that 2015 membership remains at \$100 a person. Kindly make cheques payable to the BTSA and remit to the Treasurer c/o the temple. Your dues help cover a portion of the temple's annual operating costs, but more importantly reflect a commitment to the temple. Thank you for your continuing membership and support that keep BTSA relevant and meaningful.

We also extend a warm welcome to any and all prospective members interested in joining the Sangha. Please fill out the membership application form and leave at or send to the temple.

2015 Membership Form

Full Membership (\$100 for each member) Student Membership*

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Home Address: _____

City, Province, Postal Code: _____

Telephone No.: _____

Cellphone No.: _____

Email: _____

Check to receive The Hikari newsletter by Email only.

Please send this form and your remittance to:
 Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta Treasurer
 470 40th Street South
 Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

*Note

Student membership is limited to persons 18 years or older who are currently registered in a recognized educational institution. It is free of charge with a valid student ID card. Student Members are not entitled to vote at general meetings or to hold office in the BTSA and this category does not include membership in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, the national organization.

LET'S EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THE DHARMA!

We try to be as thorough as possible but occasionally make errors. Please inform us if your name has been omitted from or misspelled in the donation lists. Anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print, please let us know so it won't be published. Thank you.

2015 Membership to March 23 - 112

Shotsuki Hoyo Donations

March 2015
 John & Donna Dubbelboer
 Dorene Gordon
 Gary Higa
 Randy Higa
 Shinako (Sheila) Higa
 Shirley Higa
 Neil Hinatsu
 Rumiko Ibuki
 Toshimi & Marian Ibuki
 Ray & Donna Journoud
 Eileen Kunimoto
 Shig & Katie Nakagawa
 May Nishikawa
 Mac & Reyko Nishiyama

Mitsuko Oga
 Kaz & Setsuko Ohno
 May Ohno
 Bob & Eiko Shigehiro
 Emily Stitt
 Toshiko Takeda
 Brenda & Lester Tanner
 Joe & Sumiko Tomiya

Total \$51,020

Other Donations

March 2015
 Canadian Forces Central Fund:
 George & Catherine Fujita
 Tomi Hisaoka
 Rumiko Ibuki
 Judith Lindsay
 Harold and Sets Okamura
 Jaglit S. (Jack) Panesar

Total - \$795

TOBAN UPDATE

Thanks to **Toban 2** for covering the March activities. It is quite a change not having our regular get-togethers after the service, but the first Sunday memorial/shotsuki tea, weekly service/naijin preparation and end of the month clean up were greatly appreciated. Thanks to Jan and **Toban 4** for looking after the Soup Kitchen lunch and to all those who pitched in to help. April promises to be a busy month for **Toban 4** with the upcoming Hanamatusuri, April 5. A big thank you to all the toban members and friends who turned out for mein-making March 27-28!

Toban 2014/15 Schedule

APR Toban 4 • MAY Toban 2 • JUNE Toban 3

Soup Kitchen

Wednesday, April 1 • Pat Sassa, Toban 3



Toban Four members who volunteered at the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen on March 18, from left: Tak Okamura, Jack and Rie Nagai, Noriko Oga, Betty Taniguchi, Lilly Oishi, Judy Fukushima, Yumi Osaka, Heidi Oishi, Jan Okamura, Susan Aimoto, Yoko and Tak Tsuji, George Tokuda, Eietsu Chiba, Stan Peters and Yoshi Aimoto.

REGULAR EVENTS

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir

Contact: Pat Sassa 403.329.3105
or Katie Nakagawa 403.327.4296

Tonari Gumi Tuesdays, 12-3pm

Taiko Class Tuesdays, 7pm (Adult)

and Fridays, 7pm (Youth)

Contact: David Tanaka 403.330.1548
or david@eyesquared.com

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club

Wednesdays, 1:30pm

Contact Nao 403.327.7357

or Tad 403.942.7783

Minyo dancers Tuesdays, 4-6pm

Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105

PROGRAMS

Art Expression Workshops (full)

April 7, 10am - 2:30pm: Self-Reflection in Images

April 8, 10am - 2:30pm: Art & Journaling

Contact: mayaichikawa9@gmail.com
or 403.382.1268

Gentle Beginning Yoga for Seniors

Thursdays 9 - 10 am (Four spaces left)

Restorative Yoga for Seniors

Thursdays 10:30 - 11:30 (Full)

Both yoga classes are for eight weeks

April 2 - May 28, excluding April 9

Contact: lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The JSBTCWF AGM is the end of April so this is a reminder to bring in your used stamps for "Save the Children." Last years stamps raised \$165.00 for a project in Burkina-Faso, a small land locked country in West Africa. This project has a matching grant of adding \$3.00 to every \$1.00 raised. This means that the \$165.00 turns into \$660.00.

There is a glass jar in the community room or give them directly to **Donna Dubbelboer**. Thanks for your support.

Thank you to all those members and friends who donated the Safeway Henckels knife stamps so that we could accumulate enough stamps to receive some good Henckels knives. We had 750 stamps so we were able to receive from Safeway, one large knife and five medium knives which will be coming in the next month. It will be great to have some good knives in our kitchen collection of old, mediocre knives.

A big "thank you" to Sway Nishimura for looking after our collection of old, used mediocre knives that often can not or do not retain the sharpened blades so it is a constant job for Sway to take them home and work on them. Much appreciated, Sway.

Jan Okamura

Mein Noodle Making Session

BTSA held a mein-making party Mar. 28 in preparation for the 2015 Spring Chow Mein Supper on May 2. There was a great turnout.



It all started with cutting cakes of dough...



...that were cut into smaller pieces, rolled and pressed.



Even smaller pieces were cut in preparation for the noodle machine.



The pieces were transformed into noodles...



that were readied for the deep fryer.



Into the hot oil!



Here's the transformation into mein noodles.



They were spread out to be sorted and cooled.



Then, packed...



and weighed.

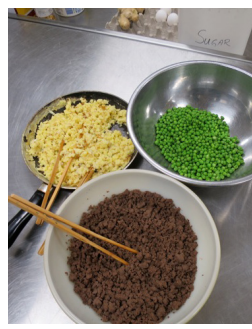
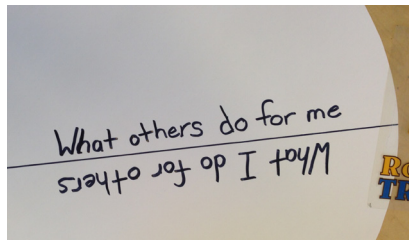


Time for lunch.



THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA children & youth dharma classes

Mindful Zentangle drawings; Naikan writing, drawings and collage recognizing what others/objects/nature do for us and what we can do for them; Paper lotuses representing the beauty that comes from unexpected beginnings: *No mud, no lotus*. These were activities in March enjoyed by the Dharma class. Thank you to our facilitators.



The first Youth Bento Class ran the evening of Feb. 27. Thank you to Eiko Aoki and Brenda Ikuta, who led nine participants, aged 11-19. The result was Sanshoku Bento (three colour bento) for participants and their families. It was a great opportunity for youth to learn basic kitchen and cooking skills that will serve them into adulthood. The next bento class is currently being planned.

Upcoming: HANAMATSURI Sunday, April 5 at 2pm
Celebrate Buddha's birthday! Service, activities and entertainment.
The Dharma class serve birthday cake during the afternoon meal.

APRIL 19 • Please plan to stay after service for refreshments, hosted by the Dharma class

BTSA Activities & Events



A great turnout for the mein-making day Mar. 28, to make noodles for the spring chow mein supper on May 2. Here, many members are rolling, pressing, and cutting dough, then feeding machines to produce the noodles.



Pictured above is part of the audience that turned out for Movie Night on Mar. 14. The feature was "Buddha's Lost Children", about an orphanage run by a tough-love Buddhist monk in Thailand. A follow-up, filmed about a year later, is expected to be shown sometime soon at BTSA.



photos: John Dubbelboer



Sheila Oishi
MCs the Shotsuki
Service March 1st.
photos: Akira Ichikawa

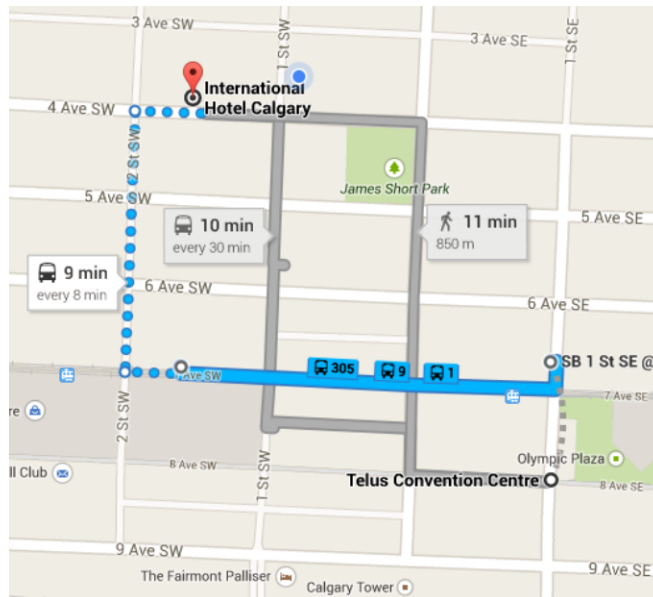
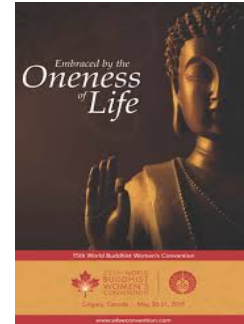


2015
WORLD
BUDDHIST
WOMEN'S
CONVENTION

WBWC UPDATE April 2015

"Embraced by the Oneness of Life"

- One month to go before the World Buddhist Women's Convention, May 30 & 31 in Calgary. Registrations are being accepted until May 1.
- A full listing of the convention workshops has been posted on the temple WBWC bulletin board and is also available at www.wbwconvention.com There is no pre-registration to attend workshops. It is on a first come first serve/general seating basis and each workshop will have a maximum number that can attend based on room space.
- There will be vans traveling between BTSA and the convention. Please sign up on the WBWC bulletin board if you haven't already done so. Shuttle service will not be available between the International Hotel and the Calgary Telus Convention Center. The BTSA Board is looking into getting this service on the evening we arrive. It is a short walk, but some may prefer using a taxi. The International is also connected via Plus 15 or walkways above ground to CTCC if the weather is poor



- Attendees are asked to bring 6 small gifts/omiyage (value of \$5 USD or less) each to share with the 5 or 6 people attending from another district at the tables of ten. Exchange of omiyage will be done at the tables after everyone is seated for dinner. Suggestions: look for something Canadian or that represents Canada...such as maple candy, chocolate, craft item, ice wine tea, or key chain.
- You may wish to purchase the custom-made convention montoshiki-sho and have a memento to be worn after the convention or are welcome to wear your personal montoshiki-sho for the services.



APRIL: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1:30pm Karaoke 1	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 2		3
2pm Hanamatsuri and Shotsuki Service 5		10am Art Expression Workshop 12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo 7pm Taiko 6	10am Art Expression Workshop 1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 8		1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit 7pm Youth Taiko 10	10:30am Exploring Buddhism 11
10:30am Regular Service 12		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo 7pm Taiko 13	1:30pm Karaoke 15	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 16	Correctional Centre Visit 7pm Youth Taiko 17	10:30am Exploring Buddhism 18
10:30am Regular Service 19		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo 7pm Taiko 21	1:30pm Karaoke Ministers' Meeting and JSBTC AGM 22	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga Ministers' Meeting and JSBTC AGM 23	7pm Youth Taiko Ministers' Meeting and JSBTC AGM 24	Ministers' Meeting and JSBTC AGM 25
10:30am Regular Service 26		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo 7pm Taiko 27	1:30pm Karaoke 29	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 30		

MAY: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					7pm Youth Taiko 1	Chow Mein Supper 2
10:30am Shotsuki Service 3		12pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko 4	1:30pm Karaoke 6	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 7	1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit 7pm Youth Taiko 8	9
10:30am Regular Service 10		12pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko 11	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 13	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 14	7pm Youth Taiko 15	10:30am Exploring Buddhism 16
10:30am Gotan-e Shinran Shonin's Birthday 17		12pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko 18	1:30pm Karaoke 20	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 21	7pm Youth Taiko 22	23
10:30am Regular Service WBWC 24		12pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko 25	1:30pm Karaoke 27	9am Gentle Yoga 10:30am Restorative Yoga 28	7pm Youth Taiko 29	WBWC 30