# **BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA**

# HikariheLight

# A thought on the war between Russia and Ukraine

**The war between Russia and Ukraine** has been continuing. I wish it will end by the time our monthly newsletter reaches you. In such a war, the innocent citizens, women and children in particular, are always victims. It is sad and painful to watch on TV the crying children who are pulled by their mothers and running in fear. On the battlefields, the true word of the Buddha cannot be heard: "One who would conquer himself is the noblest victor"

It is not easy to say which country is wrong in the war. But I understand that a big and powerful country such as Russia invaded the small country of Ukraine. In our society, we often see a person with a social position use "power of abuse" against ordinary and weak people. In such a case, our society punishes the one who used the power of abuse. In war, there is a proverb: "A winner always governs a loser." Many people in Canada, I can see, want to support a small county such as Ukraine. It is understandable.

The other day I read rather terrible comments by Orthodox Bishops of each country. The Bishop in Russia said: The conflict in Ukraine was the result of liberal forces (pointing at "gay pride parade"). On the other hand, the Ukrainian Bishop said: Killing Russian soldiers isn't a sin. These high spiritual leaders are supposed to stop the war but rather they stir up ill feeling against each other's country.

I don't think these spiritual leaders should divide people into two or discriminate each other. 'Peace', *Heiwa* (平和) in Japanese means "<u>equality</u> without discrimination leads to <u>harmony</u>."

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 During Sunday Service the other day we sang 'May Peace Prevail', not necessarily thinking of the present war. We sing this song together from time to time: "May peace, tranquility, prevail throughout the world." This is our wish. This is everyone's wish. This is, of course, Buddha's wish. We, ordinary people like peace and do not like war. We know it. The soldiers know it. And yet they fight and kill others whom they have not known. How sad it is.

Even animals, it is said, do not kill the same species. Humans are not any longer as an old saying goes: "Man is the lord of all creation." Humans may be wise but are often cunning, and lie and betray. Humans do brutal actions. We humans are capable of making many things such as guns, machine guns, chemical bombs, weapons, missiles and even atomic bombs. Indeed, warfare is not the only issue between Russia and Ukraine. This is a human issue.

A great spiritual teacher Shinran said: "It is not that you do not kill because your heart is good. In the same way, a person may not wish to harm anyone and yet end up killing a hundred or a thousand people." We are indeed conditional beings. And therefore, he emphasized "May there be peace in the world and may the Dharma (of Oneness) spread."

#### In gassho,

Yasuo Izumi, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta



「戦争という悲劇」

今、ロシアとユクライナとが戦争をし ています。早く終わることを念ずるばか りです。過去の歴史をみれば、ユクライ ナは、度々、戦争に巻き込まれてきまし た。現在は、過去より一層、化学兵器が 進んでいます。それによって、両国の兵 隊が数多く死んでいます。ユクライナで は一般市民が殺され、罪のない子供た ちまで、その尊い命が奪われています。 まことに恐ろしいことです。賢明でない 人たちが、国の指導者になれば、戦争と いう悲劇は、いつの時代にもなくなるこ とはありません。平和を求める指導者 が必要であります。

日常生活でも、社会的に地位のある 人が、弱いものをいじめ、私腹を肥や し、嘘をついて人を困らせています。ま ことに、国においても、社会において も、人間の愚かさ、自己中心性はなくな ることはないようです。だからこそ、私 たちは、真実の仏様を生活の基盤に置 く必要があると思うのです。

親鸞聖人は、愚かさや、自己中心性 を、他人の中にみるというより、ご自分 の中にみていかれました。仏様の真実 をひたすら聞信していかれたのであり ます。権力者に近づくことも、また、こび ることもなく、ただ智慧と慈悲の仏様に 遇えたことを喜び、感謝されながら、他 にも、その喜びを共に分かち合い、悲し み、苦しみ多き人生を、共に力強く生き ていかれたのです。私たちは、この様な 生き方を仰ぎ、学んでいきたいものと 思います。合掌 泉康雄

## Statement on Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

On February 24, 2022, Russia aggressively began its invasion of Ukraine through military force.

It has been reported that in cities across Ukraine, many civilians including children have become victims in addition to the well over one million Ukrainian citizens forced to flee becoming refugees.

We, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist organization, strongly condemn taking human life lightly as well as using military force to unilaterally try to change reality through violent actions for no matter what reason.

In addition to the invasion of Ukraine, the reality is that terrorist attacks and military warfare continue across the world. Reiterating our stance against violence, it is our fervent hope that a peaceful resolution may be realized as soon as possible and that there be a safe return to peace for the people of Ukraine.

Overcoming conflict that arises through mutual exclusion and differences in thinking and values, I firmly believe that through joint efforts, the path to perpetual peace will open up to a life of spiritual richness.

March 8, 2022

IWAGAMI Chiko Governor General Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

#### ロシア連邦によるウクライナ侵攻に対する声明

2022年2月24日、ロシア連邦がウクライナへの軍事侵攻に踏 み切りました。

ウクライナの各都市では子どもを含めた多くの民間人が犠牲 となり、加えて100万人を超える国民が難民として避難を余儀な くされていると報道されています。

私たち浄土真宗本願寺派は、いかなる理由があろうとも、人 命を軽視し、武力で一方的に現状を変更しようとする暴力的な 行為に抗議し強く反対の意を表します。

このたびのウクライナへの侵攻だけでなく、世界各地でテロ や武力紛争が続いている現実があります。あらためて、あらゆる 場での暴力の行使を非難するとともに、一刻も早く対話による 平和的な解決がなされ、ウクライナに再び平和が訪れますよう 願うものです。

思想文化や制度による厳しい対立や相互の排除をのり越え て、自他共に心豊かに生きていけるよう、共に努力する先にこ そ、恒久的な平和を実現する道が切り拓かれてくるものと確信 いたします。

2022(令和4)年3月8日

浄土真宗本願寺派総長 石上 智康

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# UPDATE from the Board of Directors

I hope this message finds everybody healthy and well. As COVID restrictions continue to lift, the BTSA is initiating plans on how to restart many of its programs. While we are not entirely "out of the woods," this is a more hopeful time. In looking at how to resume our activities, we have an opportunity to make decisions on our future programs. What are our priorities? What are the essential functions for the temple and our Sangha? We are planning a town hall meeting to be held on April 24th (see details below). We hope to clarify the plans for our temple.



Roland Ikuta and Val Boras, both masked, conducting the Annual General Meeting on March 6.

On March 6th, the BTSA held its annual general meeting with participants attending both in person and via zoom. We had 25 people in attendance. There were no significant changes to the board of directors as all of the directors with expiring terms agreed to remain on the board. The recommended membership amount will remain at \$100 per person for 2023. Thanks to the generous donations from our members, the temple remains in a relatively stable financial situation. We continue to run a small deficit budget due to the lack of fundraising.

The first fundraising event since the start of the pandemic was held on March 4th and 5th. Thanks to Brenda Ikuta for organizing the event and all the volunteers who came out to help. We had around 35 volunteers participate over the two days. We were able to make over 350 small bags of Chow Mein noodles. The committee had agreed that two bags of noodles would be made available for purchase by all temple members (2 per household). Noodles can be purchased on April 3rd after the Hanamatsuri service and will be made available on other dates.

The new executive was elected at the March 13th board of directors meeting. As all agreed to remain in their current positions, there will be no change in the board's first few months of operation. Roland Ikuta will remain as Chairman until he obtains his Kyoshi certification in August. He will need to step down from the board once he is fully ordained but can serve as an advisor. Kynan Gordon will remain as vice-president and will step up to the presidents' position once Roland can no longer help in this role. Val Boras will continue as secretary, and Trent Takeyasu will remain treasurer. The other board members are Wayne Tsukishima, Sheila Oishi, Sachi Scharf, Andrew Ichikawa, Jeff Haines, Brenda Ikuta, Bob Muskovich, and Anthony Richardson. Please support this board as they continue to direct the operation of the temple.

The Hanamatsuri service will remain a smaller event for this year due to COVID concerns. The service will be held at 2 pm on April 3rd. Unfortunately, there will be no food served. The service will be live-streamed. Please click on the link below if you would like to see the service via our Youtube Channel.

#### https://youtu.be/15h9rbWkfQ8

Finally, we are planning a town hall meeting for all members of the BTSA and its supporters. This will be held on April 24th from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. We will have a short service followed by a general discussion on how we run the temple in the future and what activities we would like to continue. One of the main questions of concern is whether the current Toban system can remain functional or if we need to determine another way to support the running of the temple. We will review all of the activities that occurred in a typical year before the pandemic. Decisions will be made on if these activities should be continued and how we can support them. We will also look at new programming that could be considered for the temple. A Chow Mein lunch will follow the meeting for all attendees. The lunch will also be available for takeout if participants feel uncomfortable in eating with a larger group. If you are willing to help with the lunch cooking, please get in touch with Brenda Ikuta, 403-317-0078 or brenda.ikuta63@gmail.com

If you have questions or concerns about anything mentioned above or any of the temple activities, don't hesitate to contact Roland Ikuta at <u>Rolikuta@shaw.ca</u> Thank you for being a part of our Sangha, and I look forward to seeing you all at the Hanamatsuri service and the town hall event.

#### TOWN HALL MEETING FOR ALL BTSA MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

WHEN – April 24th 10:30 am WHERE – The BTSA Hondo

- WHAT are we discussing future activities for the BTSA.
- What do we continue and what do we stop?
- How can we support these activities?
- Do we continue our Toban system or plan something else?
- Do we want to consider anything new for our temple and Sangha?

Anybody who is interested in the BTSA is welcome to attend and express your opinion. Following the meeting there will be a Chow Mein lunch served. This meal will also be available for take-out.

If you are willing to help with the Chow Mein lunch please contact Brenda Ikuta at <u>brenda.ikuta63@gamil.com</u>

# March Shotsuki Service and AGM

The March shotsuki service Mar. 5 was both an in-person and virtual event as the pandemic restrictions were lifted provincially. Ross Jacobs emceed the service.

Following the service, the temple's annual general meeting was convened. Please see page 3 in this newsletter for AGM report, Board updates and a planned town hall meeting.





Homyo stand for March





**2022 JSBTC Tsuito Hoyo Annual Memorial Service** Sunday, April 24, 2022 (10am BC / 11am AB / 12pm MB / 1pm ON)

- 1. Kansho Opening Bell
- 2. Vandana & Ti-Sarana
- 3. Sutra Chanting "Sambujo" "Sanbutsuge"
- 4. Installation of Officers
- 5. Dharma Talk
- 6. "Three Treasures"
- 7. Gatha "Ondokusan"
- 8. Words of Appreciation: JSBTC President
- 9. Closing Remarks



JSBTC Tsuito Hoyo Annual Memorial Service Time: Sunday, April 24, 2022 10 AM Pacific Time <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6920590986?pwd=YTdTbkx6M0cxeUhPNXA4YW0vRW5WZz09</u> Meeting ID: 692 059 0986 Passcode: shinran



# **OHIGAN Service Message March 20**

"Other shore is the world of Enlightenment. It is Amida's Home wherein there is no greed, no anger, no ignorance, but where there are only the light of wisdom and rain of compassion."

Good morning. This year, March 20 in 2022 is the day of spring Equinox, a beginning of spring. It is said that original meaning of 'equinox' means equal and 'nox' night. This means day and night are equal length during Equinox. It happens twice a year - March and September. The weather is ideal - neither hot nor cold. Japanese Buddhists use this time to hold *O-Higan* service. ("O" is honorific) and *Higan* means 'Other Shore', representing the realm of enlightenment or Amida's home. On the other hand, 'This Shore' representing the world of delusion or the word of birth-and-death, where things do not go as we like.

Our *Hondo*, main hall, is designed according to this representation. The place where the Amida Buddha is quietly standing is called 'Other Shore' or *naijin*, inner part, whereas 'This Shore', *gejin*, outer part. Accordingly, we are facing toward 'Other Shore', Amida's home when we enter Hondo every Sunday. Unlike other sects of Buddhism, the *gejin*, outer part of Jodo Shinshu temple is much larger than *naijin*. This means that as many as Jodo Shinshu followers come together at *Hondo* and they must hear Amida's Vow which is the most important. The purpose of all Buddhist sects is to attain the Buddhahood, 'Other Shore' and become a Buddha. Jodo Shinshu emphasize to hear a call of Amida's compassion and become a Buddha.

Jodo Shinshu does not talk about traditional practices such as meditation for long time, constant cultivation of wisdom or keeping precepts honestly. Then, some people ask, "What is a practice of Jodo Shinshu?" We can say Jodo Shinshu practice is hearing a call of Amida Buddha at the *gejin*, outer area. Shinran says hearing Amida's compassionate call itself is *shinjin*, entrusting heart which will be a cause to become a Buddha. We constantly hear why Amida Buddha is working for us and calling on us with *namo amida butsu*.

Suppose a baby has a bad dream and crying, although the baby is embraced by mother. Mother calls, "Oh, you must have had a bad dream. Don't worry, I am your mom. Your mom is with you." Then, the baby opens her eyes and know her mother is calling her. The baby knows the mother is with her. The baby stops crying and feels at peace. Before Amida Buddha we should be like a baby. We abandon our social position, abandon arrogance and pride. We abandon our contrivance. Hear Amida's call just like a baby. Amida Buddha calls us, "You are all right as you are. Hear my compassionate heart. You are my child."

At the Buddhist temple in Japan, we often see a calligraphy which is written in flame says "Dream" (*Yume*). We are like a baby dreaming this and that. In the dream we cry and worry. We are happy and laughing when things are going as we like. On the other hand, we are sad and crying when things do not go as we like. This is our everyday life in this world - in 'This Shore'. From the eyes of the Buddha, we are dreaming. The Buddha knows we are just dreaming and suffering in this world, in 'this Shore'. Therefore, Amida Buddha of great compassion is calling us, "Here is Buddha who is thinking of you. Rely on me!" Thus, Amida Buddha is working <u>in this world</u> and for us.

Shinran wrote a poem: Amida, Avalokitesvara (Kannon Bosatsu), and Mahasthamaprapta (Seishi Bosatsu) / ride on the ship of the great Vow;/ Going out on the ocean of birthand-death, / They call to beings and bring them on board.

Avalokitesvara represents Amida's compassion and Mahashtamaprapta wisdom. Amida Buddha of wisdom and compassion are calling all sentient beings not from 'Other Shore', but right here and now, the ocean of birth-and-death. Amida Buddha is urging us to board on the ship of Amida's great Vow.

Thus, Amida Buddha is not staying in 'Other Shore' of enlightenment but working constantly and always to try to awaken us in 'This Shore' that we are in Amida's compassionate Vow day and night.

Jodo Shinshu is unique teaching, for direction becoming a Buddha is completely reversed as ordinary thinking: that is, not we try to reach 'Other Shore', but Amida is always reaching us. Therefore, we are able to reach 'Other Shore' of enlightenment. This is called 'Other Power'. 'Other' means Amida's Vow.

Namo Amida Butsu Rev. Yasuo Izumi

#### April Monthly Memorial Service and Hanamatsuri, Buddha's Birthday

Sunday, April 3 at 2 p.m. Speaker: Ministerial Candidate Roland Ikuta



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"All about Queen Maya where Ashoka blossoms. In delight she reached her right arm out to pluck a branch and as she did so a prince was born. All expressed their heart-felt delight with the glory of the Queen and her princely child; Heaven and Earth rejoiced. This memorable day was the eighth day of April."

- From The Teaching of Buddha



#### Wellspring Calgary and Southern Alberta

No one has to face cancer alone. If you or someone you know has received a cancer diagnosis, Wellspring can help. They provide a comprehensive range of FREE programs and services focusing on the non-medical needs of adults living with cancer, as well as their caregivers and families.

#### Wellspring's programs are built on four pillars of support:

**Education:** Programs include Brain Fog, Healing Journey, Returning to Work, Money Matters, and more.

**Expressive Arts:** Programs include Creative Journalling, Watercolour, Drumming, and more.

**Movement and Meditation:** Programs include Exercise, QiGong, Yoga, Visualization, Relaxation, and more.

**Self-Care:** Programs include Food and Nutrition, Caregiver, Men's groups, Transitions Support Coach, and more.

Val Kunimoto, a BTSA member and cancer survivor, became a Wellspring Volunteer in 2021 to help facilitate the expansion of Wellspring Calgary into Lethbridge. Due to COVID, all the programs are currently online but there are plans to offer in-person programs in Lethbridge in the future.

Joining Wellspring is easy! Just complete the membership form at <u>wellspringcalgary.ca</u> or call 1-866-682-3135. You are also welcome to email Val Kunimoto at <u>valkunimoto@outlook.com</u>

#### **REGULAR EVENTS**

Minyo Dance Mondays, 6:30 pm Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 or sas7@telus.net

**Exploring Buddhism** Saturdays, 10:30am Contact bobmuskovich@gmail.com or Rev. Izumi

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences The BTSA expresses heartfelt sympathy to those who have lost loved ones: LaVerne Hamabata (80) on January 28, 2022 Roy Asato (90) on March 8, 2022 Tamiko Ohno (94) on March 21, 2022

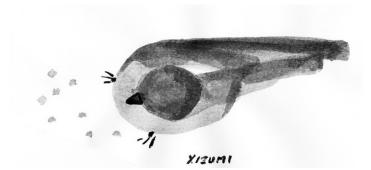
#### Memorial - Celebration of Life for Bonnie Aiko Ohashi

Saturday, April 30, 2022 at 2 p.m. Edmonton Country Club. – Ken Ohashi

The Honpa Hongwanji HQ uploaded the video to their YouTube channel of the 850/800th Joint Celebration Promotional video and it has English subtitles on it so please check it out and feel free to share it with your Dharma friends.

#### https://youtu.be/UCfCEJxLItI





# Mein-making On A Cold March Day

Temple members assembled March 5 in the first group session since the pandemic outbreak to make mein noodles. Billed as a Sangha appreciation activity and a trial run for future fund raisers, the number of participants who were required to be masked was kept at a minimum.

Twenty batches of dough for the noodles was mixed the previous day with the goal to produce 300 small bags (250 gm) of noodles, each person limited to two bags.



Cold, bright morning



Flattening and cutting dough



Cut pieces readied for noodles

Cutting noodles



Readied for frying



Two woks frying noodles





Setting out to dry



Bagged noodles

# 2022 Membership Form

<ul> <li>Full Membership (\$100 for each member)</li> </ul>	Student Membership*
Last Name:	First Names(s):
Last Name:	First Names(s):
Home Address:	
City, Province, Postal Code:	
Telephone No.:	Cell:
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, T1 J 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!

Membership at March 23: **90** 

#### Ho-onko Donations

January 2022 Sheila Oishi

#### **Shotsuki Hoyo Donations** March 2022

Dorene (Keiko) Gordon Shinako (Sheila) Higa Neil Hinatsu Rumiko Ibuki Akira Ichikawa Andrew Ichikawa & Tahirih Rempel Lily Kaga May Nishikawa Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng Setsuko Ohno Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman Roy & Pat Sassa Bob & Eiko Shigehiro Joe & Mary Shigehiro Emily Stitt Hajime Harry Sugimoto Robert & Judy Takaguchi Masaye Tanaka Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama Keith & Kathleen Kaoru Turnbull Total \$1,895.00

#### Other Donations

March 2022 Anonymous Buchanan Programme, Taguchi & Oikawa Families John and Donna Dubbelboer Rumiko Ibuki Dr. Roland & Brenda Ikuta Sylvia Oishi and Terry Hanna Sachi Scharf David & Linda Tanaka **Total - \$6,708.18** 

#### Funeral Donations March 2022

Fugi Takeda

Thank you.

Alan & Margaret Tanaka

Total - \$1,805.00

Mitsuru Keith & Midori Jane Tanaka

Keith & Kathleen Kaoru Turnbull

Total Donations - \$10,408.18

Please inform us if your name

Anyone wishing not to be

acknowledged in print, let us

has been omitted or misspelled.

know so it will not be published.

Phyllis Bell Judy Fukushima Nadine Hamabata Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi Doug & Bonnie Kawasaki Michie Kawasaki Tad & Kikuko Kokaji Gary E. & Beverly S. McIlroy Mitsuko Oga Sut & Neva Oishi Kelly Okamura Mas & Ruby Okamura Noris & Sachiko Taguchi

#### FOR CHILDREN Arrogant Monkey

There once was a monkey. The monkey could jump very far. No monkeys were able to jump as far. So, this monkey was becoming arrogant. "I am the greatest monkey in the whole world!"

One day, the Buddha and his disciples came to town and gave a talk. Everyone listened to what the Buddha was saying. They happily bowed, touching their heads to the ground. When the arrogant monkey saw that everyone was bowing to the Buddha, he thought the Buddha must be a great man

The monkey approached the Buddha and asked, "Are you able to jump like me?" The Buddha saw the monkey and only smiled.

Buddha's disciples came to the monkey and asked, "Do you have any questions about Buddha's teaching?"

The arrogant monkey said, "No, I know everything. I wanted to ask the Buddha if he could jump like me."

One of the disciples answered, "There is nothing for the Buddha can do."

The monkey said, "Well then, I want to challenge the Buddha to jump higher than me.

Listening to the arrogant monkey, the Buddha said with a smile, "All right, I will challenge you."

"That is great! If you can jump higher than me, I'll be your disciple. But if I can jump higher than you, you must become my disciple, all right?" The Buddha nodded.

"Okay, I'll jump first. Watch!" The monkey jumped higher and higher. As he jumped higher, he saw five pillars. The monkey thought, "Well, I don't think the Buddha can jump this high. I'll put a mark on one of these pillars." The monkey made a big straight mark on the pillar and flew back to the Buddha.

"Wow, you already flew back."

"Yes, I jumped very high and I saw five pillars up there. So, I put a big mark on one of the pillars. Now your turn," said the arrogant money.

The Buddha said, "Yes, I saw you jumping. Is this the big straight mark you made?" Saying this, the Buddha showed the monkey his right palm. On one of the Buddha's five finger fingers there was a tiny mark.

Well, children, you all know now. The monkey was jumping on Buddha's palm!

Since then, the monkey became Buddha's disciple and was always after him. Of course, he was now no longer an arrogant monkey. - Y. Izumi