BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

HikaritheLight December 2015

The Essence of Religions

Had we not received the working of the universal compassion and vow, when could we part from this world of delusion and affliction? Reflecting deeply on the Buddha's benevolence, let us thank and appreciate Amida always.

A few days ago, I finally finished reading a novel written by a well-known Christian writer in Japan. He was probably considered by some Christians in the West, especially Christian theologians, as a heretic. The story goes like this. Around the 17th century in Japan, Christianity was prohibited by the Japanese government and Christian priests and their followers were subject to torture and forced to abandon their religion if they were discovered. The government used a tactic to find out whether they were Christian. If they didn't abandon their religions, death awaited them. The tactic was called "fumie", meaning to step on a wooden plaque depicting the image of Jesus on the cross. One priest, a main character of the story, was found out and caught by the government along with some other followers. The followers were tortured. The priest was told that if he abandoned his religion the lives of his followers would be saved. He was forced to stand before the image of Jesus and ordered to step on it. He refused. While he was standing and looking at the image of Jesus, he heard the cries of agony and pain of his followers who were being tortured. And yet, he stubbornly refused: "I will not abandon my religion! I will never give it up!" The cries of agony and pain of his followers continued. Suddenly, he saw the tears of Jesus on the plaque and heard

a voice saying, "I know your foot feels pain. You know that I have always taken your pain as my own. Step on me. Step on me. Don't be afraid. Step on me." When he heard the voice, the priest stepped on the plaque. The lives of his followers were spared.

Some people might condemn him, saying the priest was a coward and would be punished. But by whom? To me, he did not abandon his religion but abandoned his religious ego deep within himself. The voice of Jesus made him free from his ego-self. To me, the ultimate purpose of religion, all religions, is the great compassion /unconditional love by which we are always and constantly embraced and nurtured. To find something which is beyond our egocentricity and yet is constantly crushing it in our life is the core of religions. In the case of Jodo Shinshu, that something is the compassionate working of Amida Buddha's vow by which we will be able to experience our spiritual liberation. Our recitation of Namo Amida Butsu is the sound of our self-attachment being crushed day and night. It is also an expression of our deep gratitude of encountering Amida Buddha in our changing and limited life.

In Gassho, Yasuo Izumi, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

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

残る日々

南アルバータに本格的な冬がやってきま した。寒さに風が加わると、一段とその寒 さが厳しくなる今日この頃です。道が凍 る、池が凍る、木も草も凍ってしまいます。 当地に再赴任してきて12年が過ぎまし たが、この寒さに「慣れる」ということはな いようです。しかし一冬一冬をワイフとと もに無事過ごしてこれた事がなにより嬉 しい。過ぎた日は早い。これから先はどう なるか分かりませんが、一冬一冬を過ご してきたように、これからも一日一日を大 切に生きたいものと、年末が近づくにつ れ特に思います。鈴木大拙という方は、仏 教をそして晩年には浄土真宗を西洋人に 紹介された方であります。90歳を超えて も勉学、思索、聞法に精を出された方です が、ある方が「長い人生をよく精力的によ く生きてこられましたね。疲れる、というこ とはありませんでしたか」と訊ねたとき「 長い石の階段を登るとき、上を見ながら登 れば疲れるが、一段一段を踏みしめなが ら登ると、いつの間にか登りきってしまう。 自分は一所懸命、一歩一歩、自分の人生を 生きてきた。いや、多くの命に一日一日生 かされてきた。それで、気がついたらいつ のまにか歳をとっていた」と言われたそう です。一所懸命とは「一つの所に命を懸け て日々を生きる」と言うことであります。賜 った命を大切にして残り少ないこの一年 を終わらせたいと思うのです。

合掌 泉康雄 (南アルバータ仏教会)

BTSA Notes

The last month of the year is here and the various seasonal events--including those of other religions--are upon us once again. As December begins, please keep in mind the following key dates and events at our temple:

- Dec. 5:the annual Bodhi Day Bake & Crafts Sale;
- Dec. 6: monthly memorial service at 10:30 a.m.;
- Dec. 13: Bodhi Day observance during regular Sunday service, 10:30 a.m.
- Dec. 20 and 27: no Sunday services;
- Dec. 31: Joya-no-Kane (year-end bell-ringing), Nikka Yuko Garden, 11:30 p.m., weather permitting (cancelled if below minus 20);

and later on:

- Jan. 1, 2014: New Year's Day Service, 10:30 a.m; and,
- Jan. 10: Ho-onko and monthly memorial service, beginning at 2 p.m., followed by the New Year's Party.

During this season of gift-exchanging and festivities, please keep in mind those who are less fortunate than many of us, and consider donating food parcels to the annual BTSA drive to collect non-perishable goods that will be turned over in February to the Lethbridge Food Bank. The usual donation box has been placed in the multipurpose room to receive goods. Please look over the wish list reprinted elsewhere in this Hikari.

It's also time to close the temple's financial books, so if anyone has outstanding claims for the year, please make sure they're turned in before the month is over. Forms are available in the board room to accompany any receipts for temple expenses incurred.

November was a busy month with members preparing for the Bake Sale. Early in the month, a mein-making session was held on Nov. 6--a Friday--to keep the following Saturday open to allow some of the members to attend the Calgary temple's silent auction. Several photos from that event are in this Hikari.

Later in the month, several sessions of manju-making were held, again to produce the tasty Japanese pastry for the Bake Sale.

A movie night on Nov. 21 was accompanied by a delicious curry rice supper prepared by youth and adult members of the temple. Thanks to all those who energetically prepared supper for close to 60 attendees, who later screened a documentary called "Virunga", a tense recounting of horrors at a national park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The last weeks of December will be a relatively quiescent time for official temple activities, but it'll be busy on occasion as several members have rented the premises on different days to observe private festivities. It's always nice to have the facility used as much as possible with events consistent with temple principles.

With 2015 slowly becoming history, as board chair, I thank everyone who helped manage, govern, direct, advise and otherwise looked after BTSA and its regular and special services, various fund-raising activities, and all events--including the big ones like Bon Odori at the Galt Garden and the everyday variety-throughout the year. With everyone's participation, involvement and interest, we are able to accomplish all the things we undertake. This knowledge and realization result in a deep sense of appreciation and gratitude to our sangha. Thank you very much.

Akira Ichikawa

CHAIR SCHEDULE December 2015 & January 2016

Services begin at 10:30 a.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Dec 06 SHOTSUKI Chair: Roland Ikuta Audio: Tak Okamura

Dec 13

Chair: Katie Nakagawa Audio: John Dubbelboer

Dec 20 & 27 No services

Dec. 31

JOYA NO KANE @ 11:30 pm New Year's Eve at Nikka Yuko Garden (weather permitting) Jan 01 NEW YEAR'S SERVICE

Izumi Sensei

Jan 03

Chair: Jack Nagai Audio: Sway Nishimura

Jan10 SHOTSUKI/HO-ONKO 2 pm

Chair: Roland Ikuta Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Jan 17

Chair: Kynan Gordon Audio: Brenda Oishi

Jan 24

Chair: Ross Jacobs Audio: Tak Okamura

Jan 31

Chair: Robert Takaguchi Audio: John Dubbelboer

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.





November Shotsuki

November began on a Sunday with the monthly memorial service, followed by a delicious lunch prepared and served by Toban 4. The turnout was sizeable, with those commemorating the death of a family member(s) lining up in numbers to do gassho.

Izumi's sensei's talk touched upon the long history of Buddhism but its continuing and current significance for modern-day life.

Our appreciation to Toban 4 members who put together the wonderful refreshments.

Annual Appeal for Food DONATIONS

BTSA once again will be collecting food donations to hand over to a local charity provider, sometime in February, 2016. This annual appeal, initiated before the holiday season, has as its objective to help those during the post-holiday season when the need is as great as during December and January.

This year, the board decided to turn over the donations, along with a matching cheque, to the Lethbridge Food Bank. During the last drive, food donations valued at \$445 were collected and given to the Lethbridge Interfaith Food Bank with a matching cheque, for a total close to \$900.

The Food Bank website has a wish list that includes the following: cereal, oatmeal, canned meals, canned tuna, canned meat, canned vegetables, canned fruit, peanut butter, beans, macaroni and cheese, pasta and pasta sauces, and canned or dry packaged soup.

It also lists ground beef and eggs, but we ask those who wish to donate these perishable goods to do so close to the end of the campaign in mid-February to insure their freshness.

The Food Bank also notes, "due to the volume in which we purchase the above items, we can really stretch your dollar so a cash donation can go much further than donations of food items."

Walk-in Cooler Dampened

Work on the walk-in cooler has been completed this past month with the restoration of the shroud to dampen the noise from the motor atop the unit.

Thanks to Tak Okamura, the motor is once again encased, but only after installation of a fan vented through the east temple wall. The decision to have an outside vent was made when it became apparent that the heat simply collected around the motor and the ceiling, creating unusually hot conditions there.

By way of background, a condenser in the motor had to be replaced earlier this year after the spring chow mein supper when the original part stopped working and the temperature in the cooler rose. The serviceman at that time said the shroud had the effect of intensifying the heat above the cooler, forcing it to overwork.

Removing the shroud apparently did not sufficiently dissipate the heat but it also increased the noise; the shroud was originally added to dampen the noise.

Thanks also to Roy Sassa and the board for contracting with Coleman Electric to install a fan leading to the external vent.



Note the shroud which encases the motor atop the cooler.



The installed fan ventilates the area via the vent to the outside.

Members Attend Calgary Supper

Ten BTSA members attended the Calgary Buddhist Temple dinner and silent auction fund-raiser on Nov. 7 at the Calgary temple. Selected photos from the event at our sister temple includes Brenda Ikuta holding balloons used in one of the program's activities; Mary Nishi and Jackie Robb preparing part of the supper; and entertainers at the evening's gala.

Those who attended were Roland and Brenda Ikuta, Jan and Tak Okamura, Florence Senda, Sumie Tsukishima, Jim Tsukishima, Eiko Aoki and Pat and Roy Sassa.







CHOW MEIN SUPPER Financial

The annual fall chow mein supper on Oct. 24 netted \$20,311.65, with expenses at \$6,283.85 against a gross of \$26,595.50, in a summary from Pat Sassa who coordinated the event.

A great thank you to all those who worked so diligently over a number of a days to put on this twice-a-year drive-through fund-raiser. The amount of energy displayed by members and friends during the preparation day and the actual day of the supper was truly inspiring. Thanks too to those who put together the wonderful coffee breaks and lunches to sustain the workers.

A detailed list of expenses is filed with the summary and may be viewed at the temple. The summary, with comparative figures from the 2014 fall supper, follows:

Financial Summary

(2014 figures in parentheses)

 Ticket Sales (2000 + 30 comps) Donations Extra sales of leftovers Mein sales to Members 	\$24,000.00 1,050.00 495.50 1,050.00	(\$24,000.00) (1,000.00) (455.00) (891.50) (\$25,346.50) (5,844.69)	
Gross Income Less Expenses	\$26,595.50 6,283,85		
NET INCOME	\$20,311,65	(\$19,501.81)	



2015 Membership Form

Full Membership (\$100 for each member)	Student Membership*
.ast Name:	First Names(s):
_ast Name:	First Names(s):
Home Address:	
City, Province, Postal Code:	
Telephone No.:	
Cellphone No.:	
Email:	
Check to receive The Hika	ri newsletter by Email only.
Please send this form and your rer Buddhist Temple of Southern Alber 470 40th Street South	

*Note

Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

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!

Dana of \$1,130 Collected for JSBTC

Monetary donations totaling \$1,130 were received from members during the JSBTC Dana Day appeal through October and November. The amount will be forwarded to the headquarters in Steveston, B.C., along with the names of donors.

Earlier, BTSA was informed by JSBTC that this year's donation were subject to new rules: "In order to comply with the new Canada Not for Profit Act, we are asking local temples to count the donations received, receipt their members/donors and forward the proceeds with a list of the names and address of the donors as well as amounts donated to the JSBTC."

A "thank you" to all members who responded to this year's appeal.

Sleep is the best meditation.

Dalai Lama

Membership to Nov 25, 2015: 223

Shotsuki Hoyo Donations

November 2015 John & Rita Aoki Lorne Bunney & Mayumi Tanigame-Bunney Nob & Yoko Fujimoto Judy Fukushima Dorene Gordon Chiduka Hamabata Kenneth Hamabata Shirley Higa Neil Hinatsu Marie Hirashima Tomi Hisaoka Rumiko Ibuki Sue S Kado Eleanor Katakami Chizuko Kimura Dave & Val Kunimoto Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno Gary E & Beverly S McIlroy Ken & Vickie Nakagama Shig & Katie Nakagawa May Nishikaw Sway & Toshiko Nishimura Kaz & Setsuko Ohno May Ohno Randy Ohno Heidi Oishi Tak & Jan Okamura Evelyn Osaka Yumiko Osaka Tadanori & Chieko Sakaguchi Roy & Pat Sassa Bob & Eiko Shigehiro Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro Hisashi Shimozawa **Emily Stitt** Fumi Sugimoto Harry Sugimoto

Noboru & Kazuko Sugimoto Tomiko Sugimoto Lisa D Sutherland Noris & Sachiko Taguchi Robert & Judy Takaguchi Fugi Takeda Barbara Takeda David Takeda Glen & Pamela Tanaka Harry & Betty Tanigami Herb & Lissa Tanigami Bill & June Terakita George Tokuda Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama Tak & Yoko Tsujita Fujio & Toshiko Tsukishima

Sumie Tsukishima

Total \$3,360

Jim Tsukishima

Keiko Kay Tsukishima

Other Donations

November 2015 Joyce Adachi Alberta Shigakenjinkai Anonymous via CanadaHelps Richard & Valerie Boras

Malcolm & Mary Clewes Rachael Crowder John & Donna Dubbelboer

Ayako Endo Hideko Horii

Robert B & Margaret Hughes

Rumiko Ibuki

Akira & Lorita Ichikawa

Tosh Iwamoto

Gene & Shannon Kawade

Akiko Kimoto

Kiyo Matsuno & Sets Edgar Nakagama's Japanese Food & Gifts

Shig & Katie Nakagawa

Kimino Nishi

Sway & Toshiko Nishimura

Mitsuko Oga Heidi Oishi Sylvia Oishi Tak & Jan Okamura Jaglit S. (Jack) Panesar Roy & Pat Sassa Florence Senda Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro Tomiko Shono

Tomiko Shono Wayne Smith Emily Stitt

Noris & Sachiko Taguchi Sonoko Takasaki Cathy Takeda Reiko Takeyasu Sirley Taniguchi

Carmen Tillman
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
Tak & Yoko Tsujita
Jim Tsukishima
Sumie Tsukishima
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro

Tomiko Shono Emily Stitt

Noris & Sachiko Taguchi Sonoko Takasaki Reiko Takeyasu

Shirley Taniguchi Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Jim Tsukishima Sumie Tsukishima

Total \$11,433.80

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.

REGULAR EVENTS

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir

December 3 & 10, January 7 @ 6:30pm Contact: Katie Nakagawa 403.327.4296

Tonari Gumi Tuesdays, 12-3pm

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club Wednesdays, 1:30pm Holiday break Dec 23 & 30, resuming Jan 6, 2016 Contact Nao 403.327.7357 or Tad 403.942.7783

Taiko Class

Adult taiko, Tuesdays @ 7pm

Contact: David Tanaka 403.330.1548 or david@albrio.com

Minyo dancers Tuesdays, 4:30pm No December practices planned unless announced by Pat. Junior Minyo Sundays, 11:30pm, January 17 & 24 Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105

FOR CHILDREN ONLY

When you look at your left hand, or right hand, what do you see? Do you see five fingers? Can you name them? Yes? There are the thumb, the pointer or the index finger, the middle finger, the ring finger, and a tiny finger called the baby finger or pinky. Are they all the same? No! They are all different - skinny, fat, long, and short. But these fingers are coming out of one same palm, aren't they? Usually, you do not think of this, do you? Let's think that the palm is Amida Buddha. Amida Buddha is always with us, thinks of us and embraces us anytime and anywhere. And you know what? Amida Buddha does this equally! Rev. Y. Izumi

BUDDHIST Q & A

Q. Are rite and ritual important?

A. There is a proverb in Japanese something like "drawing a dragon without eyes". It is ridiculous to see a picture of a dragon without eyes. Similarly, if there are rite and ritual of Jodo Shinshu without entrusting heart (shinjin) to the working of Amida Buddha, it is ridiculous and meaningless. I think, however, it is true for many followers that solemn acts of rite and ritual will further enhance and deepen their religious feelings. In this sense, they are important. But Master Shinran actually taught us how to attain spiritual liberation through entrusting heart (shinjin) and not how to conduct rite and ritual. Another proverb advices "learning rite and ritual and then forgetting them" Attachment to rite and ritual with a huge budget has nothing to do our true peace of mind. I remember a story of a Buddhist monk who occasionally wore an expensive robe. He was invited by a rich man to his house for a Buddhist ceremony. He made sure to tell the monk to wear the expensive robe. The monk asked his helper to take that expensive robe to the rich man. The monk never visited him. (Y.I.)



Say "Goodbye" to 2015 at Joya-no-Kane "Hello" to 2016

As the last month of the year begins, Joya-no-Kane on Dec. 31 is close at hand. This annual bell-ringing event to bid farewell to 2015 also welcomes the new year. The traditional Buddhist ceremony involves tolling a bell 108 times, corresponding to the number of human desires and passions, and to rid them in order to usher in a new year with a clean slate.

Izumi sensei will be presiding at the 12th annual Joya no Kane at the Nikka Yuko Garden, with whom BTSA partners for the event. Despite expected cold weather, the ringing will go ahead unless the temperature falls below -15 C. The public is welcome to attend, with refreshments to be served by the Garden staff after the ringing.

TOBAN UPDATE

Thanks to **Toban 4** for your work in November. And special appreciation to those from each of the toban groups & friends who were and are able to help with the mein and manju-making in preparation for the December Bake Sale. With the new year just around the corner, please note the annual toban and soup kitchen schedules. **Toban 3** is up for December, and the **Dharma class** will serve cake in celebration of Bodhi Day, Sunday, December 13. If you wish to join a Toban group please contact Lorita at 403.327.1668 or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com We depend on everyone who is able to participate.

Toban 2016 Schedule

January	Toban 4	July	Toban 3
February	Toban 2	August	Toban 2
March	Toban 3	September	Toban 4
April	Toban 2	October	Toban 3
May	Toban 3	November	Toban 2
June	Toban 4	December	Toban 4

Soup Kitchen 2016 Schedule

March 16	Toban 4
April 20	Toban 3
May 18	Toban 2
June 22	Lily Oishi

Movie Night at the Temple

Around 60 people turned out to have a warm Curry Rice dinner and watch the Movie Virunga or On The Way to School. Thanks to Eiko Aoki for leading the cooking and to John and Donna Dubbleboer, Terry Hanna and Sylvia Oishi, Totsy and Sway Nishimura, Joyce Adachi, Sheila Oishi for all of their work. This event and the Bento class raised \$490 that we hope to donate to a charity, possibly to support refugees that settle into the Lethbridge area in the near future. Thanks to Mrs. Nogamine for providing the Fukuginzuke to enhance the meal. We will plan for another movie night in the new year.















Mixing DOUGH





A couple of days of mein-noodle making sessions at the temple kept members and friends busy, but even before the noodles are pressed, cut, cooked and packed, the cakes of dough are mixed in advance. Here, two photos from Nov. 5 show part of the process involved with the temple's two mixers. At left, Yosh and Heidi punch and press the finished dough. Stan oversees the mixer. On the right, Tak keeps an eye on the quality of the dough being mixed at the second machine.

Youth Bento Class: Japanese Curry

November 20, 2015: This was the 3rd class that we have held for youth aged 11-18 years. It was led by Eiko Aoki and Brenda Ikuta. The Youth made curry for themselves and their families at a nominal fee. They were able to enjoy homemade Fukushinzuke (a popular vegetable condiment with Japanese curry) generously donated by Mrs. Nogamine. Clean up was quietly and capably supported by adult volunteers: Maya Ichikawa, Sylvia Oishi and Roland Ikuta... competence in the kitchen is a multi-staged process. The leaders are impressed at how their skills and confidence in the kitchen are growing with each class. A request for the next class was some kind of sushi; so it will be "onigirazu" (date to be announced).





Mushi-manju making session, Nov. 23



Brenda Ikuta mixing dough for outside shell.



The anko balls (the bean paste inside) are rolled by Marge Fujita, Hisae Price and Katie Nakagawa.



THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

children & youth dharma classes

Saturday, December 5 Bake & Craft Sale

Students will have a table to sell their crab apple juice and other treats.

Sunday, December 13 **Bodhi Day Celebration**

Students will serve cake and tea after the service

UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 Plans

- Shopping trip for the food bank
- Pancake breakfast fundraiser
- Guest speakers

Please email mayaichikawa9@gmail.com if you would like to be included on the Dharma class email list.

8

					1 8	A	ABI
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SANS	*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIV	VITY	12 pm Tonari Gumi	1:30pm Karaoke	6:30pm BTSA Choir	8:30 am Quiet-sitting (Seiza) and Reading*	1pm Bake & Craft Sale
2	40.20		1	2	3	4	5
CEMBER: IOBAN	10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service* 2:30pm Annual Memorial Service at CRH* 6	7	12pm Tonari Gumi	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting* 9	6:30pm BTSA Choir	8:30am Quiet-sitting (Seiza) and Reading* 1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit*	10:30am Exploring Buddhism*
DE	10:30am Bodhi Day Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi	1:30pm Karaoke	10		12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	No Service						
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	No Service	28	29	30	11:30pm Year End Bell Ringing (Joya-no Kane) @ Nikka Yuko* 31		
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 N 4						10:30am New Year Day Service (Shusho-e)*	2
JANUARY: IOBAN 4	10:30am Regular Service*	4	12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke	6:30pm BTSA Choir	1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit*	9
JAN	2pm Hoonko (Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin)/Shotsuki Memorial Service/ New Year Party* 10	11	12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko 12	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting*	14	15	16
	10:30am Regular Service* (Rev. Izumi is away) 11:30am Jr. Minyo**	18	12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke	21	22	10:30am Exploring Buddhism*
	** 24 10:30am Regular Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke		20	10:30am Exploring Buddhism*
	31	25	26	27	28	29	30

Hikarithe Light