



December 2021

## Human Loneliness

**We have only one month** before the year 2022. The COVID 19 pandemic started in March, 2020. In this year 2021, from the very beginning, we have been talking about the pandemic, the vaccine and how many people died. It is so sad that many people died alone without saying anything to their loving families. We really hope the pandemic will soon be over and we live together in safety again.

The other day, while I was looking at the backyard covered with light snow, all of a sudden, a poem written by *Bokusui Wakayama* (1885-1926), a popular poet in Japan, popped into mind: "I travel over the mountain and river of the country, searching for where loneliness will end." Here is a poem showing us the endless human journey of loneliness.

It may be true that our loneliness will never end. Why? Because all of us are living in the changing nature of human life. In this limited and changing life, our life is full of parting and separation. We all, sooner or later, will experience loneliness of human life. Many of us, I am sure, have experienced loneliness when a loved one passed away. And, one day, we ourselves will face parting from our own life. In the sutra it says: "Born alone, die alone, come alone and leave alone." Usually, by keeping ourselves busy, we forget the loneliness and we do not think of it.

Human loneliness, however, is always there in this limited world. In Japan, there were more than 20,000 people, young and old, men and women who killed themselves this year. There must be many reasons to why they killed themselves, but I think many of them succumbed to or were overwhelmed by loneliness.

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My teacher once told us, when we feel loneliness, we must think of its cause, where our loneliness comes from and how we deal with it. In this sense, when we are lonely it is a chance to listen to good teaching to find its cause and where it comes from.

The Larger Sutra says the cause of human loneliness is our doubt about Immeasurable unlimited life which is called Amida. This means we are separated from the foundation of our life, Amida's Immeasurable Life. We forget that Amida is always supporting us and embracing us.

From time immemorial, our life is connected with Immeasurable Life or rather we are in Amida's Life. But our ego or mind of doubt ignores it and cuts the connection from the life of the infinite. Then, our loneliness will arise. In the worst cases, people complete suicide.

When we are separated from Amida's Life, immeasurable and infinite Life, we become like grass without roots, rootless individuals. The grass with no roots, after all, will die in vain. Similarly, those who lost their firm foundation of life which is Amida's immeasurable life, will become lonely and die in vain.

Shinran Shonin wrote: Of those who encounter the working of Amida's compassionate Vow, no one passes in vain, meaning no one ever dies in loneliness. Amida is constantly calling to those of us with lonely hearts: "Rely on me, rely on Amida's Life." This appears in the first phrase of Shoshinge: *Kimyo muryo junyorai* ... Amida calls us, "Rely on my Immeasurable Life. Come to my home." The moment we hear it, the moment we are aware of *Amida*, Immeasurable Life, this is called *shinjin*, entrusting heart to Amida which breaks through human loneliness. We will never succumb to loneliness but will live strongly and courageously with it.

In *gassho*,

Yasuo Izumi, Minister  
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

「引っ越し」

皆様お元気でしょうか。

私事、20年間、住み慣れたコーデールを離れ、レスブリッジに移ることにしました。以前、各お寺が、それぞれ散在していた頃には、コーデールは丁度、中心地にあり何かと便利でした。しかし、各お寺が一つに統合され、新会堂が出来て以来、毎日コーデールとレスブリッジの間を運転するのが大変になってきました。特に冬のハイウェイは危険ですし、年を取ってくると、いよいよ危なくなります。丁度、知り合いの方が手ごろな家をお寺の傍に見つけてくれました。

引っ越しは、いつでも時間と労力を使います。私たちはカナダ国内で9回引越をしてきました。最初の赴任地レスブリッジからバンクーバーそしてトロント。そしてリッチモンドから再度レスブリッジへ。各赴任地でも引っ越しをしていますから、ワイフは「引っ越しの名人になったね」と笑っています。

お念仏の教えは、どこにいても喜ぶことが出来ますが、住まいが近くなっただけ、私も法務に専念できることになりました。共々、おみのり(法)を聞かせて頂きましょう。 合掌 泉康雄



# UPDATE from the Board of Directors

The board of directors have decided that due to increasing COVID numbers we will have a very careful re-opening plan. The plan for October to December is to have live-streamed services on YouTube with limited in-person attendance (10 people). The services will be held on the first Sunday of the month for Shotsuki memorial services. Please go to our YouTube Channel to view the service or click on the link below or click on the banner on our web page (thebtsa.com). Copy the link below and enter it to your browser.

<https://youtu.be/xPnNymiyvIM>

As the number attending the services has been consistently around 10 people registration is not needed at this time.

Although the activities at the temple will be limited we have re-instituted the Toban system for temple activities. This is on a trial basis and a way of re-connecting with our volunteers. Toban 2 will look after December. The primary duty will be to look after the set-up for the Shotsuki services. If a funeral arises, duties will be determined by the pandemic restrictions at that time. The Toban coordinators will be contacting volunteers to see if they are able to help and to enquire about their on-going involvement.

Those who have been at the temple have noted a significant number of pigeons on our roof over the past 6 months. Unfortunately they have left a sizable mess. The board is contacting service providers who can clean up the mess put up spikes to discourage the pigeons from landing on the roof.

The future plans for services and other activities for the temple will be considered at the December board of directors meeting. Please look for future announcements in the January Hikari.



## REGULAR EVENTS

**Minyo Dance** Mondays, 6:30 pm

last practice of the year December 6th and resuming January 10th  
Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 or sas7@telus.net

**Tonari Gumi** Currently ON HOLD due to COVID restrictions

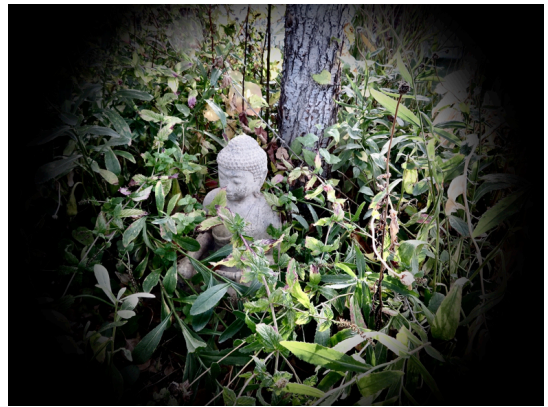
Contact Heidi Oishi 403.330.6461 or heidi.oishi@gmail.com

## PROGRAMS

**Meditation and Yoga classes** are currently ON HOLD due to COVID restrictions

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The National Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Women's Federation** which includes Lethbridge, now has an online presence. Please refer to <https://www.bcc.ca/wf.html> to find out more about the organization.



The BTSA will be observing the December monthly memorial service (shotsuki) Dec. 5 with the usual in-person attendance limited to 10 persons. As noted in the Board update, it also will be shown virtually. Please go to our YouTube Channel to view the service or click on the link below or click on the banner on our web page (thebtsa.com). Copy the link and enter it to your browser:

<https://youtu.be/xPnNymiyvIM>

**THE 17TH WOMEN'S CONVENTION IS IN KYOTO JAPAN, MAY 10 - 12, 2023** (see page 3)



**Japan is asking for an approximate number of people attending from Canada.**

This event will coincide with the celebrations of the 850th birthday of Shinran Shonin and the 800th anniversary of the Hongwanji.

Please let Donna know if you are considering attending before December 31, 2021.

This is only for an estimate, not a commitment.

Donna Dubbelboer  
403-381-7643  
Jdubbelboer@shaw.ca



more info on next page





JSBTC



JODO SHINSHU BUDDHIST TEMPLES OF CANADA

# JSBTC Japan Tour 2023

Shinran Shonin 850th Birth Anniversary  
Jodoshinshu 800th Foundation Anniversary Kyosan Hoyo  
&  
17th World Buddhist Women's Convention

## Year of 2023

- May 07 Leave Canada for Japan
- May 08 Arrive in Japan, free at leisure
- May 09 Full day Kyoto and Otsu tour (TBD)
- May 10 Celebration memorial service  
at Nishi Hongwanji Temple
- May 11 WBW Convention at Kyoto ICC
- May 12 WBW Convention at Kyoto ICC

*"Life of Nembutsu enables  
us to appreciate every  
encounter"*



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Hikari the Light



# BTSA Moments to Recall

Following are a few photographs from a BTSA event 10 years ago as part of an occasional Hikari feature.

## Bodhi Day Service - Dec. 11, 2011



The BTSA choir during the service



Sensei speaking to the children



## Joya No Kane

The 17th annual *Joya-no-kane* (Year-End Bell Ringing), will be held Dec. 31 at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden at 9 p.m. Please note the time is two hours earlier than past years. The event last year which would have been the 17th was cancelled because of the pandemic.

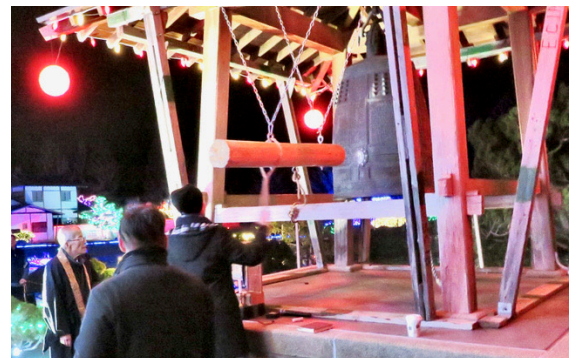
A Japanese word *Joya* means to eliminate the darkness of blind passions which Buddhists are taught humans have 108. *Kane* refers to a hanging bell, usually a big one like the Friendship Bell at the Garden. Traditionally, striking the bell 108 times eliminates all blind passions.

Yasuo Izumi sensei of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta who will look after the event adds, "more importantly, by listening to the sound of the bell which reverberates in the night sky, we reflect on the passing year with gratitude and think of the coming year with anticipation. Let's start a fresh new year, 2022."

*Joya-no-Kane* is subject to cancellation in case of -15c temperature or heavy snow.



Photos from Dec. 31, 2019



# 2021 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.: \_\_\_\_\_ 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, 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!

Membership  
at November 22: **152**

### Shotsuki Hoyo Donations

November 2021

Shinako (Sheila) Higa  
Neil Hinatsu  
Tomi Hisaoka  
David and Valerie Kunimoto  
Gary E. and Beverly S. McIlroy  
May Nishikawa  
Sway and Toshiko Nishimura  
Ken Ohno and Nancy Eng  
Setsuko Ohno  
Roy and Pat Sassa  
Joe and Mary Shigehiro  
Tom and Mitsuko Shigehiro  
Hajime Harry Sugimoto  
Robert and Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Glen and Pamela Tanaka  
Bill and June Terakita  
Joe and Sumi Tomiyama

**Total - \$885**

### Other Donations

November 2021

Rumiko Ibuki  
Akira Ichikawa  
Rev. Yasuo and Sachi Izumi  
Yoko Nishimura  
David and Wanda Okamura  
Sachi Scharf  
Dr. Tetsuo Yoshida

**Total - \$2,120**

### Funeral Donations

November 2021

Akira Ichikawa  
Akiko Kobayashi  
Kinuko Matsuno  
Ken Ohno and Nancy Eng  
Heidi Oishi  
Shig Sakamoto  
Estate of Sueco Mary Saruwatari  
Gord and Joy Saruwatari  
Kevin Saruwatari  
Lisa Saruwatari  
Tom and Mitsuko Saruwatari  
Karen Taguchi  
Louise Taguchi  
Patricia Taguchi  
Teresa Taguchi  
Kazuko Takaguchi

Tak and Yoko Tsujita  
Keiko Tsukishima  
Wayne and Amy Tsukishima

**Total - \$1,455**

**Total November 2021 - \$4,460**

Please inform us if your name  
has been omitted or misspelled.  
Anyone wishing not to be  
acknowledged in print, please  
let us know so it will not be  
published. Thank you.

## FOR CHILDREN

There was once a rich man who never practiced *dana* (giving). Behind his back, people used to say, "Well, he is stingy. That is why he became rich." One day, he wanted to eat something unusual which people never eat. He ordered his servant, "Get a nice turtle from the ocean nearby."

Soon, the servant returned with a big turtle. The rich man said, "Good, I will invite some people and we will eat it together. Of course, they will have to pay."

Listening to what the rich man said, the turtle thought, "I must run away, otherwise they will eat me." So, the turtle thought and thought and thought. Finally, the turtle called to the rich man, "Mr. Rich Man. I know you are going to eat me, right?"

"Yes, I invited some people here this evening to eat with me," said the rich man.

"Mr. Rich Man, I do not mind if I am going to be eaten. But my body is very dirty from the mud in the river. I don't think anyone wants to eat my dirty meat, right?"

"Oh, yes, I need nice, clean and delicious meat from you."

Turtle said, "Yes, I agree with you. So, I must clean my body."

"Well, I will bring a bucket of full of water," said Mr. Rich Man.

"No, no, I do not think a bucket of full of water is enough to clean me," said the turtle.

"Well, so what should I do, then?"

"I have an idea. Take me to the ocean so that you can clean me as much as possible."

"All right, if you don't try to escape from me, I will take you there."

"Thank you," said the turtle.

When Mr. Rich Man brought the turtle, the turtle asked him, "Please put me on the rock over there."

"Okay, if you are on the rock you can't run away from me," said the rich man to himself.

He gently put the turtle on the rock. At that moment, the turtle stretched his legs with all his might and turned himself upside-down. Then, the turtle went down over the rocks turning around 'goro goro goro' (the sound of roll over) and jumped in the ocean with a big splash. (Y. Izumi)





DECEMBER: TOBAN 2

| Sunday  | Monday       | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday  | Saturday |
|---|--------------|---------|-----------|----------|---|----------|
| *OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY<br>Services require registration                              |              |         |           |          |   |          |
|   |              |         | 1         | 2        | 3   | 4        |
| 10:30am<br>Shotsuki Monthly<br>Memorial Service*<br>via YouTube,<br>limited in-person | 6:30pm Minyo |         |           |          |   |          |
| 5   | 6            | 7       | 8         | 9        | 10  | 11       |
| Bodhi Day   |              |         |           |          |   |          |
| 12  | 13           | 14      | 15        | 16       | 17  | 18       |
|   |              |         |           |          |   |          |
| 19  | 20           | 21      | 22        | 23       | 24  | 25       |
|   |              |         |           |          | 9:00pm<br>Joya-no-kane<br>(Year End Bell<br>Ringing at Nikka Yuko<br>Japanese Garden) |          |
| 26  | 27           | 28      | 29        | 30       | 31  |          |

2022

| Sunday  | Monday       | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday   |
|---|--------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|--|
|   |              |         |           |          |        | 1 10:30am<br>Shusho-e<br>(New Year<br>day Service) |
| 2   | 3            | 4       | 5         | 6        | 7      | 8  |
| 10:30am<br>Shotsuki Monthly<br>Memorial Service*<br>(Shinran Shonin's<br>Memorial Service)<br>via YouTube | 6:30pm Minyo |         |           |          |        |  |
| 9   | 10           | 11      | 12        | 13       | 14     | 15   |
|   | 6:30pm Minyo |         |           |          |        |  |
| 16  | 17           | 18      | 19        | 20       | 21     | 22   |
|   | 6:30pm Minyo |         |           |          |        |  |
| 23  | 24           | 25      | 26        | 27       | 28     | 29   |
|   | 6:30pm Minyo |         |           |          |        |  |
| 30  | 31           |         |           |          |        |  |