



February 2021

If we were nothing but intellectual beings, there would be no hope for spiritual life. — D.T. Suzuki



I have been holding telephone conversations with inmates at the Correctional Center near Edmonton, and also the Lethbridge Correctional Center during the pandemic.

One day, one of the inmates ‘phoned me through the jail chaplain. I have never talked to this man before. He asked me, “I would like to become a Buddhist. Do I have to visit your temple? How much do I have to pay?” I said, “You do not need to come to our temple or to pay either, but do you have two hands?” “What?! Oh Yes. I have two hands.” The man said. “Well then, put your palms together in one.” “Yes, I did” the man replied. I asked him again, “Can you say *namo amida butsu*?” He repeated after me. So, I said, “Now you are Buddhist. What you have said means ‘Thank you Amida Buddha. I rely on you.’ Please do this when you wake up in the morning and before you go to bed.” “Oh, this is easy. I can do this.” “Well, it is not that easy to continue. Please remember that Amida Buddha is always concerned about your life. Please do not forget what I have said,” said I. “Yes, thank you.” The man replied. Time of conversation with inmates is always limited and short. I told him, “Please take care. We will talk again.”

I do not think it is to accumulate knowledge about Buddhism to become a Buddhist. Even if one knows about Buddhism well, he/she is not necessarily

a Buddhist. The most important thing to become a Buddhist is a humble and modest attitude to Amida Buddha, which is called “entrusting heart.” This means to receive Amida’s heart of great compassion without any doubt. Our knowledge is just a means to deepen our appreciation of Buddha’s heart. In other words, if we do not appreciate Buddha’s heart of compassion we must study. But we often become arrogant and conceited when we gain knowledge of Buddha’s teaching. Shinran Shonin said “Those who are arrogant are not able to appreciate Buddha’s heart of compassion.”

We humbly put our palms together to the call of Amida Buddha and recite *namo amida butsu* in gratitude. Our entrusting heart is the cause to bring us naturally to Buddhahood, Amida’s call says, “There is nothing to worry. Be as you are.” When we just respond to say *namo amida butsu*, Amida and we are one. I think we do not need to think this and that too much with our small “self” or “ego” or our contrivances.

There was a man who went to a barber shop to get a haircut. During the sitting, the man moves this way or that for the barber. The barber said, “Please don’t move. You are actually disturbing my work. Rely on me. Just be as you are. Then everything is all right.” The barber knows what he has to do.

Similarly, Amida Buddha knows how he will liberate those of us who are deeply mired in the world of sadness and loneliness, frustration and suffering. Amida calls to us: “Be as you are. I know who you are, Rely on me.”

Shinran Shonin said: *When entrusting heart is settled, our birth in Buddha’s world is also settled.*

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

皆様お元気でしょうか。そろそろ春の暖かさがやってきます。

皆さんの顔を見ることが出来なくなって、もう一年近くになります。電話やビデオでは、お話が出来たり、顔を見ることが出来ますが、何か欠けたものがあります。それは、「温かみ」と言えるかも知れません。ビデオは便利です。しかし、そこには人間同士の「ふれあい」、そして、そこから来る「温かみ」がありません。機械を通しての接触だからでしょう。当然、機械には「温かみ」はありません。どんなに技術が発達しても、人間は、技術では得られない、それ以上のものを求めているのではないのでしょうか。

コロナ感染症から起こる「死への恐れ」もやがて無くなるでしょう。しかし、死を避けることはできません。どんなに科学や医学が発達しても、死を避けることはできません。私たちは、避けることの出来ない「死」を、仏様との「ふれあい」そして「温かみ」を頂いて「死への恐れ」を超えていくことが出来るのでしょうか。その為には、どうしても仏様の優しい心を聞いていかねばならないと思います。

合掌 泉康雄



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403.327.1260 • www.theBTSA.com

BTSA Notes from the Board of Directors

a) With COVID restrictions still in place all in-person events will continue to be suspended. Re-launch strategy will be reassessed at the February Board meeting to determine plans for March. During this suspension the Odori group (Mondays) and Explore Buddhism group (Saturdays at 10:30 AM) continue to meet via zoom. If you would like to join the Odori group please contact Pat Sassa at sas7@telus.net and if you would like to join the Explore Buddhism group contact Robert Muskovich at bobmuskovich@gmail.com

b) Future Funerals – In-person temple activities have been suspended; therefore, families will gather at their home or at the funeral home. If there is a need for funeral arrangements involving the temple please contact Roland Ikuta or Izumi sensei.

c) Thursday Evening Sangha Gathering via Zoom– Roland and Brenda Ikuta have restarted the Sangha Gathering via Zoom on every other Thursday (the 2nd and fourth Thursdays of the month) to allow members to touch base and socialize. The meeting will start at 7 pm. If you would like a zoom invitation please contact Roland at Rolikuta@shaw.ca In February we will have sessions on Feb. 11th and 25th.

d) The BTSA continues to produce regular pod casts about everyday life and Buddhism. We are wrapping up our first season with 10 podcasts being produced. Please check them out by going to our web page or downloading “A Buddhist Life” where ever you get your pod casts. We have an exciting second season planned. This next season will include interviews with Candice Shibata Sensei on grief and Kaitlyn Mascher-Mace sensei on working as a paramedic during COVID.

e) The light standards in the parking lot at the temple have been fixed! Thanks to David Major for doing the work to get them updated to new LED lights.

f) Our experiment with the new zoom format for our services was successful for the January Shotsuki service. As most people seem to prefer this format we will continue with it for the next few months until we can again gather in person. The services are recorded and downloaded to our YouTube channel. If you miss the 10:30 AM time you can still go on to YouTube to see the service. With our recording the service on zoom you may appear on the YouTube broadcast if your video is on (in a gallery view). If you do not want your picture to be seen please click off your video setting on zoom. If you need help ask one of the organizers prior to the service.

The zoom link for the Feb. 7th and 21st services can be found on this page. You can also go to our web page and click on the banner to log in. For the pet appreciation and Nirvana day service you could have a picture of your pet or even have your pet on your lap during the social gathering time prior to the service.

Topic: Feb. Shotsuki 2021 Zoom Meeting

Time: Feb 7, 2021 10:30 AM MST

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84698093092?pwd=REVjZlJkZFZmR29udk92RXRYZ2EvQT09>

Meeting ID: 846 9809 3092

Passcode: 061372

Topic: February Nirvana and pet appreciation service Zoom Meeting

Time: Feb 21, 2021 10:30 AM MST

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86197844900?pwd=SURYWkUvcDcrVkFVWmovdVU2NmFPdz09>

Meeting ID: 861 9784 4900

Passcode: 110046

g) If you have any concerns or issues about temple activities please do not hesitate to contact Roland Ikuta or any members on our board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

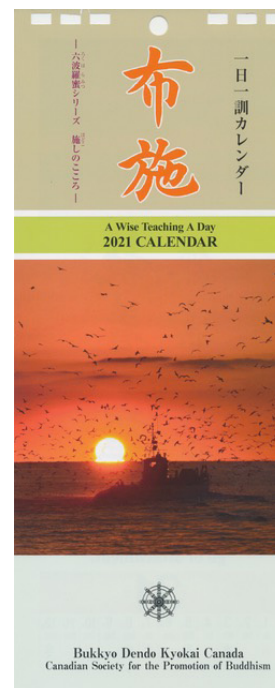
Condolences

Mrs. Fumiko Sekiya (97) passed away on January 23, 2021

Online Dharma School sessions hosted by the Living Dharma Centre. Please refer to the notice on page 3.

2021 Calendar

Anyone wanting a 2021 Calendar (as depicted), please let Izumi Sensei know. They're available at the Temple.



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: _____

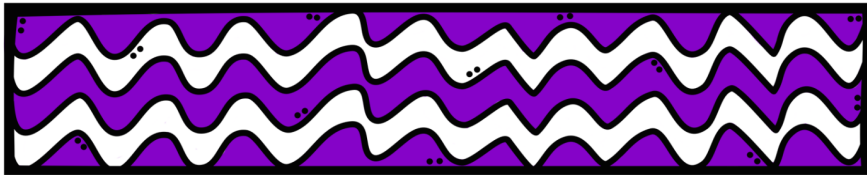
- Check to receive The Hikari newsletter by email only.

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!



Beginning **Saturday, January 30**

Living Dharma Centre will be hosting **monthly Zoom Dharma School** sessions

9:00 to 9:45 am PST

Theme #1 **"The Hidden Buddha In You"**

Aoki Socho will be leading this first service

Format:

20-minute service with everyone

5-20 minutes of age-appropriate theme-based activity in breakout rooms

5 minutes of Closing service and announcements with everyone

Hope you can join us...promises to be FUN!

Questions and requests for the Zoom link can be directed to Mari Cameron:

MariIkuta@gmail.com

In gassho,
LDC- JSBTC Zoom Dharma School

Membership
at Jan. 20 – 26

Hoonko Donations

January 2021

Tomi Hisaoka
Akira Ichikawa
Hiroshi Kitagawa
May Nishikawa
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Heidi Oishi
Lilly Oishi
Sheila Oishi
Tak & Jan Okamura
Roy & Pat Sassa
Bob & Eiko Shigehiro
Joe & Mary Shigehiro
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
Emily Stitt
Noris & Sachiko Taguchi
George Tokuda
Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Total - \$1,430

Shotsuki Donations

January 2021

Judy Fukushima
Shirley Higa
Tomi Hisaoka
Gene & Hilda Horii
Akira Ichikawa (for Dec 2020)
Hiroshi Kitagawa
Allan Leavens
May Nishikawa
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman
Lilly Oishi
Irene Sakamoto
Bob & Eiko Shigehiro
Joe & Mary Shigehiro
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
Fugi Takeda
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama

Total - \$1,330

Other Donations

January 2021

Mas & Mutsuko Fukushima
Hironaka Employee Benefits Inc.
Tosh Iwamoto
Rev. Yasuo & Sachiko Izumi
Hiroshi Kitagawa
Mitsuru Keith & Midori Jane Tanaka
Harold & Florence Tomiyama

Total - \$3,270

Funeral Donations

January 2021

Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Total Donations - \$6,070

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

Zoom with Dr. Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams

Note: Those who wish to view Williams sensei's zoom lecture may do so through Feb. 13 at the following site:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nWypE25oYlxhbXiEstebN_uTzK_zhnmB?usp=sharing

If this does not work for you, please contact jsbtchheadquarters@gmail.com to request the link, or BTSABoard@gmail.com for assistance.

Manifest Destiny versus *Bukkyo Tozen* might be a short-hand historic characterization of Buddhism in North America, especially apparent with the outbreak of World War II, in Dr. Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams' zoom session Jan. 23.

Williams sensei, professor of religion at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles addressed the zoom lecture joined by numerous Buddhists and interested persons. His talk, entitled "Dharma Lessons from the WWII Japanese American and Canadian Incarceration," was one in a lecture series sponsored by the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Living Dharma Centre,

In setting the context of his talk, sensei cited a poem by Bishop Berkeley, the Irish-Anglo namesake of the city in California: "Westward the course of empire takes its way...", embodying the idea of Manifest Destiny, that North America, notably the United States but also Canada, was "God's land," white and Christian.

He, then, contrasted the foregoing with the eastward progression of Buddhism from India through China, Korea, Japan, and eventually across the Pacific, and the consequences of race plus religion during the war. (*Bukkyo Tozen*, which is the title of Terry Watada's book on Jodo Shinshu in Canada, is loosely translated as Buddhism Eastward.)

With the outbreak of World War II, Williams hypothesized that --race along with a threatening religion--accounted for the incarceration of persons of Japanese ancestry and not those of other enemy ethnicity, the Germans and Italians, white and Christian.

Sensei noted among the dharma lessons of incarceration included the idea of doing with whatever is available or *hoben*, particularly with foodstuff, since the climate and environment of the camps were so different from the rich and fertile coastal cities and farmlands. As well, he showed photographs of an *ojuzu* made from peach pits and an *obutsudan* built from scrap wood as examples of "skillful adaptation."

As internees were allowed out of camps but prohibited from returning to their coastal home sites, many in both countries did move eastward to cities, founding new temples where none existed before. In small measure, then, a more enlightened period did eventuate in an eastward presence, sensei noted.

Sensei's recent book, *American Sutra*, grew out of his study of archival material, among them those of the father of his mentor at Harvard, Dr. Masatoshi Nagatomi. Dr. Nagatomi's father was the first minister of the Raymond Buddhist Temple (now a historic site), and later was assigned to the San Francisco temple. Dr. Williams said he knew next to nothing about the incarceration of Japanese in North America until he came across some dharma talks that Nagatomi sensei had written while in Manzanar concentration camp.



Biographical note: Duncan Ryuken Williams was born in Tokyo, Japan to a Japanese mother and British father. After growing up in Japan and England until age 17, he moved to the U.S. to attend college (Reed College) and graduate school (Harvard University, where he received a Ph.D. in Religion). Williams is currently Professor of Religion and East Asian Languages & Cultures and the Director of the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture and former Chair of USC's School of Religion. Previously, he held the Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair of Japanese Buddhism at UC Berkeley and served as the Director of Berkeley's Center for Japanese Studies for four years. He has also been ordained since 1993 as a Buddhist priest in the Soto Zen tradition and served as the Buddhist chaplain at Harvard



Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada

Living Dharma Centre Lecture Series



Rainbow Dharma

Shin Buddhism and LGBTQ+ Issues in Canada and America

Saturday, February 27th



10 am BC

11 am AB

Noon MB

1 pm ON



Dr. Jeff Wilson

(Professor of Religion, University of Waterloo)

Description: Join us as we explore LGBTQ+ issues in light of Amida Buddha's great compassion. Topics of discussion will include: what is the history of LGBTQ+ treatment in Buddhism? How can Shinran be understood as a queer Buddhist icon? What resources does Buddhism provide for understanding LGBTQ+ identities and issues in a positive manner? Why does Jodo Shinshu have the best Buddhist record on LGBTQ+ concerns?

Advanced registration is required at

www.jsbtc.ca

[NEXT] SAT, APR 17th

"Jodo Shinshu in the West"

Seminar with 3 Bishops



tricycle.org

Hikari^{the}Light



For Younger Children

Do you know Pete the Cat? Pete the Cat likes to sing a song about how much he loves his white shoes. Along the way he jumps into a pile of strawberries and his white shoes turn red. But instead of getting upset, he sings about how much he loves his red shoes. He continues to step in other things and each time his shoes change to a different color. But each time, Pete sings that he loves his new shoes.

Pete is like a Buddha. Why? Because Pete has a Buddha's mind. Buddha's mind is like water. Put water in a round container, it becomes round. Put water in a rectangular container, it becomes rectangular. Or you put water in a square container, and it becomes square. How interesting it is!

Pete's mind is soft and flexible. It changes according to the form of the container. And yet the water itself does not change. Yes, everything changes but the mind of Pete the Cat does not change. That is why I think Pete is like a Buddha. Pete does not cry or get upset or become angry even if his circumstances have changed. Pete really has a Buddha's Mind. Pete the Cat is a really great cat.

For Older Children

The year 2021, according to the Chinese zodiac, is the Year of the Cow. The cow is an animal with a gentle nature and is closely associated with Buddhism. The founder of Buddhism is Siddhartha Gautama. Siddhartha Gautama was born in India in approximately 500 BC. The family name 'Gautama' means sacred cow. Someone said, "What!? Gautama means Holy Cow? Oh, it is easy to remember." Indeed, the cow is sacred and holy in India. Therefore, in India, people do not kill cows. Of course, they also do not eat beef.

Speaking of cows, there is a humorous, yet thought-provoking, story in Japan.

It was a beautiful, warm Sunday morning. An elderly woman, who was somewhat greedy, hung up a white cloth on a clothesline after she did laundry. Because it was a bit windy, the white cloth blew off and landed on the back of a cow. The surprised cow, who was leisurely walking, started to run. The woman saw it and ran after the cow, crying, "Wait, you thief! That's my cloth." The cow didn't heed her. The woman screamed, "Wait, please wait. That is my cloth! I just cleaned it." The cow, however, continued to run. Gasping, she ran after it. Finally, the cow stopped because it saw a crowd of people. The elderly woman finally caught up to the cow. She also saw the people there. She asked one of them why they were there. "Well, this is Sunday. We are listening to a noble priest talk." The woman never attended the temple services because she did not want to make a donation. But that day she followed the many people who entered the temple and listened to the priest's talk. It was a great talk. The woman forgot all about her cloth. But that was okay. The woman appreciated the cow who led her to the temple to listen to the teaching. And since then, she became a faithful follower of Buddha's teachings.

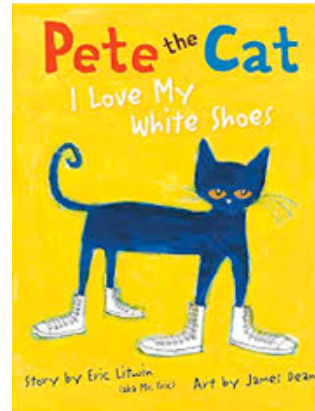
Rev. Yasuo Izumi

SHOES

Impermanence • Resilience • Gratitude

1) "Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes"

(narrated book, WhiteBoard Entertainment Studios, 3:55 minutes)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fj_z6zGQVyM

2) Robert Gubenco Sensei talks about "Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes"



<https://youtu.be/EpooAGFRcFk>

3) What is your Favorite Footwear?

Activity Sheet "I Love My ____" (favorite footwear) opposite page

4) Resilience Resources

If parents and Dharma School teachers want more information, ideas and activities on building resilience, check out the attached websites on page 8 of this newsletter.

I Love My

(favorite footwear)

Draw or paste in a picture of your favorite footwear.

Why are they so great?

Do you look after them in a special way?



Every child is an artist

Andrew Ichikawa is working on bringing a children's gatha to life: "Buddha Loves You". These are the words:

Fly, fly little bird
Run, Run little pup
Don't cry pussy cat
Swim, swim little fish
Buddha loves you

You can draw whatever you like. Will you help us out with this project? The drawings will appear in a video posted on the BTSA website.

Please submit your drawings to adichikawa6@gmail.com

In gassho,
Dharma School Leaders

RESILIENCE RESOURCES

Resilience: Making Kids Sesame Street Strong

<https://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits/challenges>

Review from **Child Mind Institute**

<https://childmind.org/blog/resilience-making-kids-sesame-street-strong/>

Big Life Journal

Resilience Kit for Kids

<https://biglifejournal.com/products/resilience-kit-printables-kids>

Top 30 Children's Books About Resilience

<https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/top-childrens-books-resilience>

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/guides-and-publications/raising-resilient-children>

Centre on the Developing Child: Harvard University

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-resilience-series/>

If any links in the Hikari are not working for you, please copy the URL and paste into your search bar