BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

HikaritheLight

Those who deeply entrust themselves to Amida's Vow of great compassion should all say Namoamidabutsu constantly, whether they are waking or **sleeping.** – Shinran

When I quoted the above mentioned poem, someone came to me and said, I can't say namoamidabutsu while I am sleeping. I asked him how about while you are awake?

The poem encourages us to say namoamidabutsu whenever we think of Amida's Vow of great compassion in which Amida Buddha is calling us, "I never let you live alone. I am always with you."

I think you have heard the word "Namasute". Namasute and namoamidabutsu both came from India. I heard there is Namasute Yoga in a TV program. *Namasu* of "Namasute" means to respect, to honor or to trust. Te means you. So, namasute means I respect you, I honor you or I trust you. This is a daily greeting in India.

Namo came from namasu. Te means Amida Buddha, So, Namuamidabutsu means "I respect and honor and trust Amida Buddha."

We chant Shoshinge written by Shinran Shonin. In the beginning of Shoshinge, we read "Kimyo-muryojunyorai." "Kimyo" means "namo". It means "I take refuge in immeasurable Buddha." The second line: "Namo-fukashigiko", means "I take refuge in Inconceivable Light." Why does light appear here? Because Amida is a short form of Amidaba and Amidayus. Amidaba means Amida's light, light of wisdom. Amidayus means Amida's light of compassion. After all, both lines mean "namoamidabutsu": I take refuge in Amida Buddha of immeasurable and inconceivable light of wisdom and compassion.

Shinran's interpretation of these two lines, however, is different. He said: Amida Buddha is asking us, "Please take refuge in Amida Buddha of immeasurable and inconceivable light of wisdom and compassion. You see, Buddhism talks about "non ego" or "non self." So, "I" does not come first but Amida Buddha does.

Shinran's teaching is based on Other Power, or Amida Buddha centered life. So, the subject of two lines is reversed from "I" centered to "Amida Buddha" centered.

"Namoamidabutsu" is also said as a myogo, meaning the name that calls. Who calls? It is Amida Buddha who calls. So, namoamidabutsu is the calling voice of Amida Buddha. The moment we hear this calling is shinjin or entrusting heart. Shinjin is not something we achieve or improve. Shinjin or Amida's true heart, is working in our everyday

Here is an easy story to illustrate what Shinran said. There was once an elderly woman. This woman who was very happy every day, is moving her lips and reciting namoamidabutsu whenever she works or walks.

Someone asked her, "why are you always reciting namoamidabutsu?" With a smile, she said, "Well, because Amida Buddha is calling me, saying that you are not alone. Don't worry no matter what happens. I am with you." So, I respond to Amida in gratitude, "Namoamidabutsu. How happy I am!"

Yasuo Izumi, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta [大地の暖かさ]

コンクリートの上を歩いていると疲れ るということはありませんか。いつも、犬 の散歩で朝早く30分ほど歩いていま すが、時々、膝が痛くなることがあります。 それで思い出したのですが、ある茨木県 の僧侶が、京都まで歩こうと思い、最初 は、コンクリートの大きい道を歩きつづ けたところ、二日目に足が腫れて歩けな くなったそうです。それで舗装されてい ない田舎道を歩きだしたところ、足の腫 れも引き、その後は、何の問題もなく京 都に無事到着したという話です。田舎道 は、普通、コンクリートで舗装されてはい ません。コンクリートは、どうしても固く 冷たいものです。柔らかくもありません から長くは歩けません。田舎道は土の多 いいところです。土は、柔らかく温かいの です。地球上は、自動車が走れるよう、コ ンクリートで、どんどん、固められていき ます。人間中心です。

春が、もうすぐそこに来ています。す べての生き物が、大地の柔らかさと、暖 かさから生まれてくる季節です。人間 も、あらゆる生き物と共生して存在して いることを教えて下さるのが、仏様の教 合掌 泉康雄



The WISTERIA

The following is a modified version of Rev. Roland's Dharma Talk on January 22, 2003

As for myself, Shinran, I simply take to heart the words of my dear teacher, Honen, "Just say the nembutsu and be saved by Amida," and entrust myself to the Primal Vow. Besides this, there is nothing else."

This is a passage taken from the Tannisho, written by a disciple of Shinran Shonin and recorded some of his dharma messages to his followers. It illustrates the humility of master Shinran. Reflecting on humility as an essential trait in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, I want to talk about the Wisteria symbol.

The hanging Wisteria is the symbol of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Particularly the Nishii Hongwanji-ha school. It has two Wisteria flowers that form a circle with two intertwining vines in the center. As a child growing up, I always felt it looked like the face of a Koala bear. We have an artificial Wisteria tree at the entrance to our temple. The flowers hang down in full blossom. This symbolizes humility and a humble reverence for the Buddha. The Wisteria flowers are also symbolic of the brightness of the Buddha's teaching and the transitory nature of life.

Why is humility felt to be so important in our school of Buddhism? It is because of Shinran Shonin. He was initially a Tendai monk at a monastery in Mount Hiei. He practiced for 20 years but felt he had made no progress toward enlightenment. He left the monastery to study under Honen Shonin. He learned the importance of the Nembutsu practice under Honen. Shinran Shonin felt that self-reflection and coming to terms with our limitations as Bonbu (limited beings) was critical in the process of Shinjin or embracing the compassion of the Buddha. Once he realized he could not achieve enlightenment on his own power, he truly accepted the Vow of Amida Buddha as his only path to attain birth in the Pure Land. So, self-reflection and understanding our own limitations are considered the first step toward Shinjin. This understanding of our limitations is why humility is essential for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists.

I want to now focus on a related topic: role models on how to live our lives. I feel that these symbols that represent the ideals of Buddhism are like role models in our life. I have had various role models who each exhibited a particular trait that I feel is important. An example is my father, who displayed the quality of being innovative and a risk-taker. I am not sure how many people know, but outside of religious life, he successfully created the Edo of Japan chain of Restaurants. The second person I consider a role model is my Grandfather Ikuta. He was a very kind and quiet man. He was extremely gentle and always treated people with the utmost consideration. For example, he constantly invited people to join his family for supper even if he knew there was not enough food for his own family. This was a trait that annoyed my grandmother.

The third person who was my role model was a geriatrician named Peter McCracken. He was the director of the division when I first started working in Edmonton. He was the person who hired me for my first job as a physician and was one of the reasons I went into geriatric medicine in the first place. He was a little gruff and often used swear words in front of patients.

However, he always had the best interest of his patients in mind and was very caring.

The last person I want to mention as a role model is Akira Ichikawa. He had many traits that I admired. These included his wisdom and thoughtfulness. I was always asking for his advice. I often ask myself, "What would Akira say?" or "How would Akira react" when faced with a difficult situation? However, the characteristic I most admired in Akira was his humility. Despite all the great things he achieved and all the work he did for the temple, he never wanted recognition. He never wanted to call attention to himself. This was reflected in his memorial service, where he insisted that there be no picture, no Eulogy, or tribute. I feel he was one of the humblest persons I have met, and I think he exhibited this humility very much in keeping with the ideas that Shinran Shonin emphasized. He was indeed like the Wisteria flowers. So, when we think of Shinran Shonin's teachings, for me, one of the people I will never forget is Akira. He modeled humility in a way that I will try to emulate. While his passing saddens us, he will continue to influence me profoundly.

Dr. Roland Ikuta, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta





incredibleseeds.c

The Annual General Meeting

for the Buddhist temple of Southern Alberta will occur after Shotsuki service on **March 5th** 2023. Please consider this as the official notice for the meeting. We will present several reports and make final decisions about a spring Chow Mein Supper. We are also looking for 1-2 new people to join our board of directors. If you are interested in joining our board please contact Val Boras, Rev. Roland or Kynan Ono.

UPDATE from the Board of Directors

We mourn the loss of Dr. Akira Ichikawa, a pillar of our Temple. In addition to seeing to the day to day operation of the Temple, Dr. Ichikawa served as President of the Board of Directors from 2009 to 2018. Dr. Ichikawa dedicated many hours each month to editing the Hikari Newsletter. He was a role model for many of us with his true devotion to Jodo Shinshu, kind and quiet intelligence, and very humble nature. He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered.

The BTSA's Annual General Meeting will be held on March 5th, 2023, after Sunday Service. One of the items for decision by the membership will be whether or not BTSA should have a Spring Chow Mein Supper.

The Temple Commercial was released on <u>thebtsa.com</u> website and BTSA's Facebook page, January 1, 2023. So far, this video has been viewed by almost 5000 people.

The New Year's Day service was attended by 40; 64 people attended the Ho-onko service.

Temple clean-up will be scheduled for three times per year, in September, February, and June. Please note announcement on this page.

The February Shotsuki memorial service will be held Feb. 5 Here is the link to the YouTube Live Channel:

https://youtu.be/yr5yKI1yAVY

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Boras BTSA Secretary

CHAIR/AV SCHEDULE February & March

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

Feb 05

SHOTSUKI Ross Jacobs Andrew Ichikawa, AV

Feb 12

NIRVANA DAY PET APPRECIATION Sheila Oishi Kynan Gordon, AV

Feb 19

Maya Ichikawa TBD

Feb 26

David Major Brenda Ikuta, AV

Mar 05

SHOTSUKI Joyce Shigehiro Robbie Scharf, AV

Mar 12

John Dubbelboer Andrew Ichikawa, AV

Mar 19

Wayne Tsukishima Brenda Ikuta, AV

Mar 26 Val Boras

Kynan Gordon, AV

EXPLANATION OF BUDDHIST'S TERMS

1. **Dharma:** Dharma is the teaching expounded by Shakyamuni Buddha. Therefore, Buddhism is called Buddha Dharma. Dharma, which is one of three treasures for Buddhists, originally means "to support" or "to hold." Buddha's teachings support us anytime and anywhere. Accordingly, the dharma talk in a Sunday Service means a talk about the dharma. (Y.I.)



Nirvana Day with Pet Appreciation Service

The service will be held on Sunday, Feb. 12 at 10:30 am. Shakyamuni Buddha peacefully passed away on Feb. 15 at the age of 80 years old in northern India This day is called a complete Nirvana. It is said that when the Buddha died all kinds of animals came to bid farewell. Please bring a picture of your current pets or ones of those who have passed away. They will be displayed up by the Naijin during service.



istockphoto.cor

New Year Temple CLEAN UP

The Temple served us well in 2022! We look forward to many wonderful gatherings to come.

Many buddhist traditions celebrate the new year with a thorough cleaning of the temple: symbolically sweeping away all that was bad in the past year, welcoming fresh opportunities of the new year, focusing on the present moment, organizing clutter and addressing excess, reflecting with gratitude on objects for their service.

CAN YOU JOIN US IN THIS ENDEAVOR?

Sunday, February 26, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (Before/After service)

Recharge together with a pizza lunch.

*Note that many of the jobs can be done at other times. If you would like to be involved but this date and/or time is inconvenient for you, just sign up and let the organizers know in the comment section.

Please review the available slots below and click on the button to sign up.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A45A9A723A2FE3-newyear

Thank you so much for your help and we look forward to catching up with our sangha friends!

In Gassho, Brenda





Images from clean up in Oct. 2022

REGULAR EVENTS

Minyo Dance Mondays @ 6:30pm

Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 sas7@telus.net

*The Minyo Dancers perform weekly at the Nikka Yuko Gardens_nikkayuko.com/events.asp

NCS Adult Taiko Tuesdays @ 7pm

Contact tanaka.david@gmail.com 403.330.1548,

Study Class Saturdays @ 10:30am

Contact bobmuskovich@qmail.com or Rev. Izumi

Meditation Thursdays @ 7pm

To register contact Vickie Macarther spirityoga@shaw.ca

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences

Dr. Akira Ichikawa (84) Jan. 3, 2023 Mr. Yoshio Fujimoto (96) Jan 11, 2023

Minister Schedule

- Rev. Izumi will be at temple on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday
- Rev. Dr. Řoland Ikuta will be at temple on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday

Reminder

If you want to book a room or event at the temple, visit the temple website (thebtsa.com), fill out a request form in the Member section and send it to sylvia.oishi@gmail.com for confirmation of availability.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1. If you are a Chow Mein Supper enthusiast, consider joining the Chow Mein Supper Leadership Team. We would love to run this significant fundraising and community event twice a year! Contact Brenda if you would like more information (403) 317-0078.
- 2. Join a Toban! We have 3 teams who take turns supporting Sunday Services (providing baking, serving refreshments, setting up the altar). It's a nice way to get to know people when you are working happily side by side.



NENJU REPAIR Sunday, February 5

With many people deep cleaning their homes, there are a number of broken onenju surfacing, some belonging to our parents and grandparents. In response, the Temple will have a Nenju Repair Table in the multipurpose room which people can visit after service. Attendees are welcome to bring in their broken nenju and see if there is appropriate material to repair them. Individuals will be available to assist in restringing and tying the beads. Repurposed or donated loose beads will also be available if you want to make your own personal creation.

HO-ONKO

This year's Ho-onko service fell on January 8th. Below are images of the afternoon's service, food prep and meal, and BINGO to end. A huge thank you to Toban 3 for a busy month of January.













photos: John Dubbelboer

2023 Membership Form

(\$100 for each member)	() Student Membership*
ast Name:	First Names(s):
ast 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 to January 20 – 46

Ho-onko Donations

January 2022

Fiko Aoki John and Donna Dubbelboer Judy Fukushima Dorene (Keiko) Gordon Shinako (Sheila) Higa Rumiko Ibuki Mike Kado Dave and Val Kunimoto Kinuko Matsuno Joyce Miyashita Jim and Joan Nakagawa Sway and Toshiko Nishimura Mitsuko Oga Ken Ohno and Nancy Eng Setsuko Ohno Heidi Oishi Sheila Oishi Tak and Jan Okamura Roy and Pat Sassa Sachi Scharf Bob and Eiko Shigehiro Joe and Mary Shigehiro Tom and Mitsuko Shigehiro **Emily Stitt** Tomiko Sugimoto Noris and Sachiko Taguchi

Robert and Judy Takaguchi

Fugi Takeda
Eichi and Betty Tanaka
Glen and Pamela Tanaka
Sue Thibodeau
George Tokuda
Clifford Thomas
Noel and Karen Thomas
George Tokuda
Jim, Marion and Shannon Tomiyama
Joe and Sumiko Tomiyama
Marjory Tomomitsu
Tak and Yoko Tsujita
Wayne and Amy Tsukishima

Total - \$4,695.00

Shotsuki Donations

January 2022

Anonymous Cash Donation
Judy Fukushima
Nadine Hamabata
Neil Hinatsu
John and Jean Miyanaga
Mark and Tamara Miyanaga
Sway and Toshiko Nishimura
Ken Ohno and Nancy Eng
Bob and Eiko Shigehiro
Joe and Mary Shigehiro
Tom and Mitsuko Shigehiro
Robert and Judy Takaguchi

Masaye Tanaka Mitsuru Ken and Midori Jane Tanaka Bill Teshima George Tokuda Joe and Sumiko Tomiyama Marjory Tomomitsu Tak and Yoko Tsujita

Total - \$1,185.00

Other Donations

January 2022

Anonymous Cash Donation Roy Adachi CanadaHelps.Org Choju Kai Helen Hikita Riley and Stephanie Honess Akira Ichikawa Rev. Yasuo and Sachi Izumi Arlene Oishi and Jeff Coffman Alan and Margaret Tanaka Masaye Tanaka

Total - \$2,821.50

THE OBUTSUDAN WORKSHOP will be held on Saturday, Feb 25th, 2023, at the temple. Please see the poster on the following page for details of the times and events that will occur that day. If you are planning to attend any component of the workshop, please contact Roland sensei at Revroland@shaw.ca or 403-317-0078. If you would like to participate in the 360-photo capture and Memory Making session of your family Obutsudan, please let us know ahead of the workshop so we can make the appropriate arrangements. There will be refreshments served after the information session. The sessions will also be available live streamed on our YouTube page at the link below:

https://youtu.be/LyDNxrV8UUI

Funeral Donations

January 2022

Bob and Molly Akune Roy and Itoko Akune Eiko Aoki Earl and Leanne Fisher Deb Friesen Judy Fukushima Shinako (Sheila) Higa Rumiko Ibuki Susan and Mike Kitagawa Joe and Marion Mori Jim and Joan Nakagawa Shig or Katie Nakagawa May Nishikawa Sway and Toshiko Nishimura Karen Nishiyama or Ron Wenger Setsuko Ohno Heidi Oishi David and Wanda Okamura Mas and Ruby Okamura Chiyeko (Chec)Robinson Ken and Christine Rogers Roy and Pat Sassa Bob and Eiko Shigehiro Dawn Sugimoto Harry Sugimoto Noriko Sugimoto Tomiko Sugimoto Noris and Sachiko Taquchi Kazuko Takaguchi Robert and Judy Takaguchi Patricia Tanaka David Taniquchi Bill and June Terakita George Tokuda Jim and Marion Tomiyama Marjory Tomomitsu Raymond and Lena Tsuji Brian and Marjene Turnbull Keith and Kathleen Kaoru Turnbull

Total - \$2,715.00

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

6 HikaritheLight

Butsudan – Buddhist Family Altar

Do you own a Butsudan...

and wonder what it is and what its significance is to your family? but feel it doesn't fit in your current life and are unsure of what to do with it? Or, perhaps you'd like to obtain a *Butsudan* to invigorate your Buddhist faith?



The **Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta (BTSA)**, in co-operation with the **Nikkei Memory Capture Project** invites you to a special one-day event:



Butsudan Workshop

Saturday 25 February 2023, 10.00 am to 4:00 pm Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta



The Butsudan Workshop provides you with the opportunity to:

- deepen your understanding about your Butsudan's meaning, rituals, spiritual value, and history
- refresh your Butsudan and revitalise its meaning in your life, or repurpose it for donation.
- obtain a Butsudan and have it consecrated in a special ceremony, the nyū-Butsu shiki.

The Butsudan Workshop consists of three sessions – you can attend one, two, or all.

Session 1 (10-11 am)	Session 2 (11am-3pm)	Session 3 (3-5pm)		
Butsudan Information Session	Butsudan 'Memory Making' Session	Nyū-butsu shiki — Butsudan consecration ceremony		
Reverend Roland Ikuta will introduce the <i>Butsudan</i> 's meaning,	Create a 'living memory' portfolio, including a visual+audio record of your	A nyū-butsu shiki will be held for		
history, rituals, and upkeep.	Butsudan. Facilitated by the Nikkei Memory Capture Project.	those in attendance wishing to take away a donated <i>Butsudan</i> .		

Please can you help to record Southern Alberta's Japanese Canadian history?

Butsudan 'Memory Making' Session

Butsudan played a central part in southern Alberta's Japanese Canadian history. Your memories about your family's Butsudan can reveal much about this history. Please would you share some of these with the Nikkei Memory Capture Project?

Working with trained oral historians, you are invited to create a **'living memory' portfolio** to keep for your family and pass on to future generations.

With your consent, your portfolio will also be archived for future researchers to study Japanese Canadian history.

Living Memory Portfolio*

Your 'living memory' portfolio will include:

- A 360° moving photograph, or set of still photographs, of your Butsudan
- A short digitally recorded oral history interview that preserves your memories and stories.



To create a portfolio, please bring your *Butsudan* to the *Butsudan Workshop* to set it up with its accourrements; or we can arrange a short home visit.

Greeting 2023 YEAR OF THE RABBIT

Many temple members rang in the new year on its eve at the annual bell-ringing in Nikka Yuko Gardens, while taking in the outdoor light show. The weather was mild for the season, but participants walked carefully and avoided icy paths that had built up during an earlier deep freeze.

On January 1st, the following day, temple members and friends gathered for service and afterward raised a glass welcoming 2023. Everyone then enjoyed a special treat of ozoni- a Japanese mochi soup traditionally served on New Year's Day. This was coordinated by Sheila Oishi- many thanks!



Photos: Akira Ichikawa



















	Sunday	Monday	Tuesdo	ay	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
FEBRUARY: TOBAN 4	*OFFICIAL BTSA A	СТІVІТҮ			1	7 pm Meditation 2	3	10:30 am Study Class*	
	10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service* (live stream) Nenju repair workshop	6:30 pm Minyo Dance	7 pm Taiko	7	8	7pm Meditation	10	10:30am Study Class*	
	10:30am Nirvana Day, Pet Appreciation Service *	6:30 pm Minyo Dance 1	7 pm Taiko	14	15	7pm Meditation	17	10:30 am Study Class*	
	10:30am Regular Service*	6:30pm Minyo Dance	7pm Taiko	21	22	7pm Meditation	24	10am Butsudan Workshop* 25	
	8am Temple Clean-Up 10:30am Regular Service*	6:30 pm Minyo Dance	7pm Taiko	28					
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesdo	ay	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
MARCH: TOBAN 2					1	7 pm Meditation 2	3	10:30am Study Class*	
	10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service* (live stream)	6:30 pm Minyo Dance	7pm Taiko	7	8	7pm Meditation	10	10:30am Study Class*	
	10:30am Regular Service*	6:30pm Minyo Dance	7pm Taiko	14	15	7pm Meditation	17	10:30am Study Class*	
	10:30am Regular Service*	6:30pm Minyo Dance	7pm Taiko	21	22	7pm Meditation	24	10:30am Study Class*	
	10:30am Regular Service*	6:30pm Minyo Dance	7 pm Taiko	28	29	7pm Meditation	31		