



## NEW YEAR'S GREETING

At the beginning of the new year, I would like to extend my greeting to you.

On June 6, 2014, receiving the Jodo Shinshu tradition from Monshu Emeritus, I was inaugurated as the Hongwanji Resident Head Priest and Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha 25th Monshu. To commemorate the occasion together with all of you in front of Amida Buddha and the Founder Shinran Shonin, Dento Hokoku Hoyo, or the Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition will be observed at Hongwanji, Kyoto, Japan from this coming October 1. With this observance as an opportunity, it is my hope that the Jodo Shinshu teaching will spread to as many as possible.

The Jodo Shinshu teaching was set forth by Shinran Shonin nearly eight hundred years ago and it has been carefully transmitted to us today. Be it Shinran Shonin's time or the present day, the Jodo Shinshu teaching remains unchanged and continues to serve as our spiritual foundation. This is because in this world of impermanence we live our lives never knowing when it may end. No one can guarantee that tomorrow I will not be involved in an incident or accident that will bring about the end of my life.

In closing, let us continue our journey along the Nembutsu path by going to the temple to hear more of Amida Buddha's constant working for our benefit. In doing so, throughout this year, let us reflect on our true selves, come to appreciate all the encounters of our everyday lives, and in gratitude, recite the Nembutsu.

Namo Amida Butsu.

OHTANI Koshin  
Monshu  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

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



### 年頭の辞

新しい年のはじめにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

私は、2014年6月6日に、前門主の跡を承けて法統を継承し、本願寺住職ならびに浄土真宗本願寺派第二十五代門主に就任いたしました。この法統継承を仏祖の御前に奉告する「伝灯奉告法要」を本年10月1日より、京都の本願寺にてお勤めいたします。この法要を機縁として、多くの人々に浄土真宗のみ教えが伝わることを期待しています。

浄土真宗のみ教えは、今から約800年前に親鸞聖人によって説かれました。そして、今日の私たちにまで受け継がれてきています。親鸞聖人の時代においても現代においても浄土真宗のみ教えは、変わることなく、私たちの生きる依りどころとなります。なぜなら、私たちは、いつ終わるか誰にも分からない命を生きているからです。明日、私が事件や事故にあわないという保証は誰も出来ません。

本年もお寺へお参りし、阿弥陀さまのおはたらきを聞かせていただきましょう。そして、そのことによって、自分自身の姿を省みて、日々のご縁を大切にしながら、南無阿弥陀仏とお念仏申す一年を過ごさせていただきましよう。

2016年1月1日

浄土真宗本願寺派  
門主 大谷光淳

## Dear all readers of Hikari the Light, A Happy New Year to you!



Time flows and people are not the same. In my life, I have met many people including ministers. There are some ministers I still vividly remember. Rev. Kenryu Tsuji who passed away some 10 years ago was one of them. He was a minister who was a man of foresight and action. Right after the World War II was over, he moved to Eastern Canada to establish the Buddhist Sangha and subsequently he built three Buddhist Temples there for people who seek the Dharma, regardless of the race, color and gender.

One time, I had an opportunity to dine with him together with other ministers. Rev. Tsuji who had just retired then, was sitting right in front of me. He was cheerfully talking in the pleasant atmosphere. Suddenly, he gazed at me and asked “What is your name?” I was astonished, for we have known each other for many years. Although he was much senior than I, we had talked at various occasions. I thought that he was joking. I said, “Don’t you remember, Sensei? I am Izumi.” He immediately responded, “Oh, yes, yes. I know you!” His response was rather humorous that we all laughed. Soon after that gathering, I learned that he was suffering from the later stages of Alzheimer’s disease.

Time will never wait for us. Nobody stays the same. Furthermore, nobody knows when, where and under what conditions one will die. Our elders, therefore, caution us, saying “There is not tomorrow for listening to the Buddha-Dharma.” The Dharma is the way to transform our life which does not go as we like, into the one of light and hope. This year again, let us live together to our fullest in hearing and receiving the light of Buddha’s infinite wisdom and boundless compassion.

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

南アルバータ に再赴任して14年目、カナダにやってきて46年目を迎えます。早かったなあ、としか言いようがありません。年末には、子供、孫が全員揃いました。この寒い時に、わざわざよく来たものだと感じました。若いエネルギーにはかないません。私たちを含め、20人が集まったのですから、家の中は文字通り足の踏み場もないほどに混雑を極めました。それでも何とか皆、楽しんで帰ったようです。会って喜び、帰ってまた喜びで、本当に二重喜びでした。それにしても、皆が帰った後は、急に静かになり、家の中が広がったように思うのも不思議です。一抹の寂しさも感じました。ところで今年は申(サル)年です。私は申年ですからトシオトコ。体は幸い元気。いよいよ親鸞聖人の残して下さったお念仏の心、絶対他力のみ教えに耳を傾け、味わいを深めたいと思っています。そして聖人のお心、み教えを周りの人たちにも伝えたい、と思うことしきりです。今年も、共に聴聞させて頂きましょう。紙上をお借りしまして、本年も何卒宜しくお願い申し上げます。 合掌 南アルバータ仏教会開教使 泉康雄

## Board Retreat Set for January 9

In 2011, BTSA conducted a Survey of members to do a check on how the Temple was running shortly after amalgamation. A number of improvements were made based on the feedback from this survey:

- Transportation for Taber Seniors
- Guest Lecture series
- Introduction to Buddhism classes
- Mindfulness Meditation classes
- Obento cooking classes for youth
- Stopped incense use
- Ikebana
- Taiko for children
- Updated website
- Discussion groups

After 4 years, the Development Committee wanted to check in with members once again to measure overall satisfaction with the current services, events, fundraising and programs offered by BTSA. 52 respondents have contributed suggestions and comments over the past two months.

The results have been summarized and will be discussed at a Board Retreat, scheduled for **January 9, 9:00 am through 1:00 pm, lunch to follow**. Renae Barlow has graciously agreed to facilitate this meeting. BTSA members are invited to attend this session particularly Izumi Sensei, Board of Directors, Toban leaders and assistants, Dharma School leaders, Service Chairpersons, and sub-committee members (e.g. Building Maintenance, Development, Obon, Chow Mein Supper).

Please let me know if you are interested and available to attend this event: Brenda at (403) 317-0078 or rolikuta@shaw.ca. Agenda will be provided closer to the date.

# BTSA NOTES

“January to December, we’ll have moments to remember...”

So begins a 1950’s ditty that captures highlights of the past year even as a new one begins. For many of us, the sequence of these moments may be hazy as we try to recall which one preceded or followed another, against our overarching amazement of how rapidly 12 months can pass by. Unless one methodically enters them into a diary or journal, it’s easy to forget the sequence.

Still, what followed what may not be as important as the fact that most moments that do come to mind--happy and sad--tend to be those shared with family, friends and acquaintances, and rarely individual in nature. “We’ll have moments to remember” with its first-person plural construction connotes a social activity consistent with the Jodo Shinshu principle of interdependence, with the timeline of our annual highs and lows most often linked to a commonality that makes the moments special.

BTSA’s annual cycle of events helps to locate easily the sequence of key moments where members and friends share work, play and gatherings like funerals, memorials, and celebrations. So the order of the moments can be linked to the calendar. Still, even if we might not be able to remember the order, it is these shared moments of interdependence that strengthen and energize the sangha year in and year out.

Aside from the joyous Hanamatsuri and Obon and the socializing during mein-making, chow mein suppers, and the bake and craft sales, there were funerals where several of our members and Dharma freinds were mourned during 2015. In editions of the Hikari, Izumi sensei offered condolences to five families who had deaths, one of the noteworthy being Mrs. Shizue Yamagishi who died early in the year at the age of 105.

Another sad moment was the news of Michael Hayashi sensei’s terminal illness and subsequent death early in December. Hayashi sensei started his ministerial career with the old Buddhist Federation of Alberta. Please see a related article elsewhere in this issue. The interdependence with his life and his family’s continues.

Among the distinguishing highlights of 2015 was the World Buddhist Women’s Convention at the end of May hosted by Canada’s women’s federation. Many of our members were chairpersons of sessions at Calgary to which thousands of delegates descended from throughout Canada, the continental United States, Hawai’i, Japan, and Brazil. What a glorious three-day shared moment with so many Jodo Shinshuist from around the world!

As 2016 begins, a sign of our maturing temple is the board retreat planned for Jan. 9. In a related article elsewhere, the details are mapped out to renew our vision for the coming years to keep the temple relevant and meaningful to its members. We invite all interested persons to participate in this half-day workshop.

Also, at this time, the perennial request goes out to all members to consider allowing your name to stand for a directorship on the board. All contributions to and new ideas in the governance of the temple are warmly welcomed. As well, we acknowledge with thanks and gratitude the continuing support from the devoted sangha throughout the year. Your ongoing and constant assistance and well wishes keep our temple strong and vibrant.

Thank you and a happy new year to all. More moments to remember are always being made.

Akira Ichikawa

## CHAIR SCHEDULE January & February 2016

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

**Jan 01** NEW YEAR’S SERVICE  
Izumi Sensei

**Jan 03**  
Chair: Joyce Shigehiro  
Audio: Sway Nishimura

**Jan 10** 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

**Feb 07** SHOTSUKI  
Chair: Ross Jacobs  
Audio: Sway Nishimura

**Feb 14** NIRVANA DAY/PET  
APPRECIATION  
Chair: Ross Jacobs  
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

**Feb 21**  
Chair: Val Boras  
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

**Feb 28**  
Chair: Sway Nishimura  
Audio: Tak Okamura

**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.

## TOBAN UPDATE

Thanks to **Toban 3** for your work in November and for supporting the Dharma Kids, serving cake and tea in celebration of Bodhi Day. Please mark your calendars with the 2016 toban schedule. **Toban 4** is up for January. The Special Services /Events 2016 Calendar is now available, but check your Hikari for any updates. Any questions? Contact 403.327.1668 or [lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com](mailto:lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com)

### 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

### Next Soup Kitchen

March 16 Toban 4

# 2016 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.: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

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 Dec 25, 2015: 229

### Shotsuki Hoyo Donations December 2015

- Mitsuko Arizono
- Dorene Gordon
- Shinako (Sheila) Higa
- Shirley Higa
- Neil Hinatsu
- Marie Hirashima,
- Gaye K. Hironaka
- Gene Horii
- Terry Horii
- Violet Horii
- Akira & Lorita Ichikawa
- Tom & Lily Kaga
- Eleanor Katakami
- Eileen Kunimoto
- Gary E & Beverly S. McIlroy
- Jack & Rie Nagai
- Shig & Katie Nakagawa
- Yoko Nakamura,
- Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
- Kimiko Ohno
- May Ohno
- Heidi Oishi
- Evelyn Osaka
- Hisae Price
- Craig & Sachi Scharf
- Emily Stitt
- Noris & Sachiko Taguchi,
- Brian Tajiri
- Tom & Tsuyako Tajiri
- Jamey & Pauline Takeda
- Eichi & Betty Tanaka
- Glen & Pamela Tanaka
- Bill & June Terakita
- George Tokuda
- Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama

**Total \$2,055**

### Other Donations December 2015

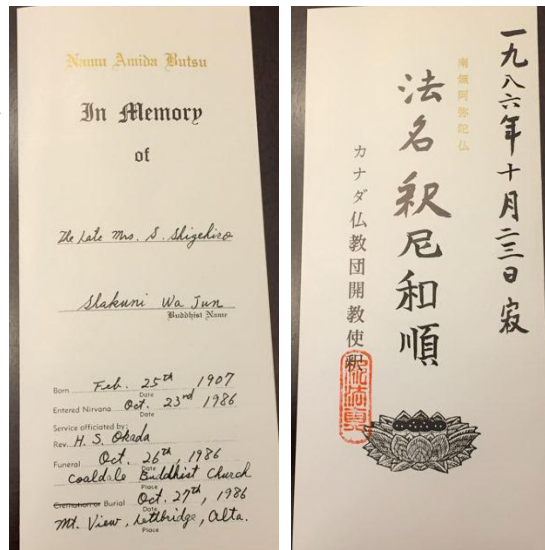
- Rachael Crowder
- Marg Fujita
- Jim & Atsuko Hagihara
- Irene Higa
- Rumiko Ibuki
- Tosh & Kaz Kanashiro
- Douglas & Susie Mikado
- Shane & Etsuyo Nishi
- Sheila Oishi
- Jagjit S. (Jack) Panesar,
- Florence Senda
- Barbara Takeda
- Bill Teshima,
- Kaz & Marjory Tomomitsu
- Keiko Kay Tsukishima
- Irene Yamamoto
- Ron & Kathryn Yoshida

**Total \$2,510**

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.

## Homyo Sought

The photos are of the front and reverse of a homyo (funeral tablet) that was mistakenly taken following the October, 2015, Shotsuki service. It bears the names of "The late Mrs. S. Shigehiro" whose Buddhist name is given as "Shaku Wa Jun." If any Hikari reader might have erroneously taken this homyo along with his/her own, please return it to the temple or to Tom Shigehiro. Everyone's assistance is appreciated.



## REGULAR EVENTS

### Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir

January 7 @ 6:30pm

Contact: Katie Nakagawa 403.327.4296

**Tonari Gumi** Tuesdays, 12-3pm

**The Lethbridge Karaoke Club** Wednesdays, 1:30pm

Contact Nao 403.327.7357 or Tad 403.942.7783

### Taiko Class

Adult taiko, Tuesdays @ 7pm

Contact: David Tanaka 403.330.1548 or david@albriio.com

**Minyo dancers** Tuesdays, 4:30pm

**Junior Minyo** Sundays, 11:30pm, January 17 & 24

Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105

## Ho-Onko & New Year's Party



Ho-Onko falls on Jan. 10 and commemorates the death of the founder of Jodo Shinshu, Shinran Shonin. The service begins at 2 p.m. and will be held in conjunction with the monthly memorial service for January.

Following the service, the temple's annual New Year's Party will be held, with supper and bingo games.

The artwork accompanying this article is unrelated to Ho-onko, but depicts an incident from Shinran's life when he was exiled to northern Japan by imperial order. Shinran was about 35 years old at the time, and the incident occurred as he and his attendants sought lodging for a night at a humble hut on the way to their destination.

The owner, a farmer, refused their request. Although it was snowing, they decided to sleep outside the hut. When they were quietly reciting the onembutsu, the farmer heard the faint sounds, came out and apologized for his rudeness and invited them in to stay the night.

This is one of many stories about Shinran, illustrating the tenacity with which he held to his teaching.

(The artwork is from a poster from 1957 by Japanese artist Kiyoshi Awazu. The poster was in commemoration of the 700th anniversary of Shinran's death.)

## FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Please put your hands together. Can you see two thumbs? These thumbs are looking at you! You never thought about it, right? In Japanese, the thumb is called "oya-yubi", meaning "parent finger".

No wonder these thumbs are looking at us. Our parents are always thinking of us and looking after us. Did you know that Master Shinran lost his parents at an early age? He must have been very lonely. Sometimes, he must have cried by himself. But, when he became older, he earnestly listened to Buddha's teaching for many years. And you know what? He found the great compassion of Amida Buddha! He called Amida Buddha his parent. After that, he became a very happy man and shared his happiness with many people around him. Next time when you put your hands together, think about Master Shinran and remember that Buddha's compassion is always embracing you! (Rev. Izumi)

## BUDDHIST Q & A

### Q. What is Hoonko Service (報恩講) ?

A. "Ho" means to repay, "On" means indebtedness.

It is a memorial gathering to honor Master Shinran of Jodo Shinshu teaching. According to the lore of our mother temple, he passed away on January 16th in 1263. It is a very important religious observance for the followers of Master Shinran, for it expresses our

thanksgiving to repay our indebtedness to Master Shinran who taught us the Nembutsu teaching or teaching of Namu Amida Butsu. Master Rennyō, the eighth descendant of Master Shinran, said to the followers: "After you have gained 'entrusting heart' to Amida Buddha, even when you hear the same teaching again, you should feel as if it was for the first time. People only wish to hear something new. However many times you may hear the same teaching, you ought to think that this is the rare, marvelous teaching you have never heard before."

It is indeed rare to hear that ordinary people such as ourselves will become an enlightened being solely by the working of Buddha's wisdom and compassion. (Y.I.)

## BTSA donates \$3,000

In keeping with past BTSA practice, the board at its December meeting agreed to make \$1,000 donations to each of three local charities. The decision was based on community needs related to the high influx of refugees, high job loss and shut-in seniors.

Donations were made to the Lethbridge Immigrant Services, the Lethbridge Interfaith Food Bank, and Meals on Wheels.

# Michael Hayashi Sensei's Death

The BTSA is very saddened to announce the Rev. Michael Hayashi who was the resident minister for the Manitoba Buddhist Temple passed away on Dec 4th 2015. A funeral for him was held Dec. 8 at the temple where he was resident minister.

Rev Michael was a former minister assigned to Southern Alberta 18 years ago. He had been the minister for the interior BC temples (2000 - 2004), Toronto Buddhist Temple (2010 - 2014) and Manitoba.

He was admitted to hospital in late November and was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He was remarried to his former wife Kiyomi on Dec 2. He leaves to mourn his wife Kiyomi and their sons Brandon, Justin and Ethan.

The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada has set up a fund to help the family with future expenses and to help Kiyomi set up an education fund for his children. Any members of the BTSA can contribute to the fund in two ways:

1. Write a cheque to Kiyomi Hayashi and mail to Kiyomi Hayashi and family C/O JSBTC 220 Jackson Ave. Vancouver, B.C. V6A - 3B3; or
2. The BTSA will collect cheques and send them directly to Kiyomi. Please make out cheques to her and not to the BTSA. Cheques will be collected until the end of January 2016 at which time they will all be mailed directly to Kiyomi. Please do not send cash or bank drafts.



Personal information gleaned from Sensei Michael's obituary makes the following notations:

*Sensei Michael was born on April 26, 1965 in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Like many Japanese-Canadians, he grew up in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist home. His grandfather, with whom he lived, was the lay-minister at the Thunder Bay Buddhist Church. This connection would become the roots for his future. In 1992, Sensei Michael attended Lakehead University receiving a Honours Bachelors of Arts in English and Education. With the encouragement of his family he went on to study at Ryokoku University in 1997 where he received a Master of Arts in Jodo Shinshu Theology.*

# Bodhi Day Service

More than 60 persons turned out for the annual Bodhi Day service on Dec. 13 to commemorate the enlightenment of the historical Buddha. The program included a performance by the choir which led the congregation in the gatha, "Song of Bodhi Day", and two other numbers, "Momiji" and "Dona Nobis Pacem" (Bring Us Peace).

Izumi sensei said the service memorializes when Siddhartha Gautama became an awakened one, the Buddha.

"The world of Dharma has many names such as Nirvana, Buddha's World, Pure Land, Perfect Bliss and so on. It is actually not the realm to be attained but rather the realm to be discovered, because the world of Dharma is always here," he said.

"The light of wisdom and compassion which we call Amida is always here surrounding us. The Buddha did not create it. He just discovered it while he was meditating. The Dharma, the light of Amida manifested in him and was revealed to him."

The service was following by a reception during which time delicious snacks were provided by Toban 3, and a cake showing the Buddha's enlightenment was served to those in attendance.



The annual Bodhi Day sale on Dec. 5 began at 1 p.m.



Inside, last-minute preparations like putting together a bento lunch were going on before the sale.



Many hands had a part in putting the different parts of the bento together...



Donated bake goods also were being displayed nicely on tables.



Meanwhile, the customers began lining up outside and in the foyer.



The doors are opened and the first customers enter to check out the goods.



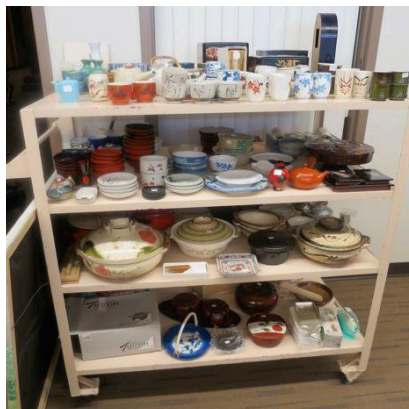
The steady stream of customers reduced elbow room as tables were bereft of goods.



Only 40 minutes passed before most of the baking, noodles, and bento were gone.



The Dharma class had a table in the foyer.



Meanwhile, the *All Things Japanese* portion of the sale continued in the board room...



...and the hondo



Some of the many members and friends who volunteered to make the sale a resounding success. Thanks to All.



JANUARY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY						
					10:30am New Year Day Service (Shusho-e)*	
					1	2
10:30am Regular Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke	6:30pm BTSa Choir		Board Retreat*
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2pm Hoonko (Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin)/Shotsuki Memorial Service/ New Year Party*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSa Board Meeting*		1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit*	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30am Regular Service* (Rev. Izumi is away) 11:30am Jr. Minyo (also on Jan 24)		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke			Day of Mindfulness
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke			10:30am Exploring Buddhism and Shin Buddhism*
10:30am Regular Service*		25	26	27	28	29
31						30

FEBRUARY: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke			10:30am Exploring Buddhism and Shin Buddhism*
		1	2	3	4	5
10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSa Board Meeting*		1:30pm Correctional Centre Visit*	10:30am Exploring Buddhism and Shin Buddhism*
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10:30am Nirvana Day and Pet Memorial Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke			10:30am Exploring Buddhism and Shin Buddhism*
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10:30am Regular Service*		12pm Tonari Gumi 4:30pm Minyo Dance 7pm Taiko	1:30pm Karaoke			10:30am Exploring Buddhism and Shin Buddhism*
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10:30am Regular Service*						
28	29					