

Hikari the Light



January 2024

New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Over the last year, innumerable people worldwide have been affected by natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and forest fires. I was particularly shocked by the wild fires that devastated the island of Maui in the state of Hawaii. This disaster completely destroyed the temple hall of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission and one temple member was reported to have lost his life. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to all who have perished in those calamities. I would also like to express my sympathies to those who are still coping with the dire situations. It is my sincere hope that all who have been affected will soon be able to return to a normal daily life.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022 is still continuing. Not only that, conflict between Israel and Palestine has once again flared up from October 2023, embroiling nations concerned with victimizing a large number of people many of whom are civilians. Looking at the appalling state of the world, the following words of Sakyamuni Buddha come to mind. "Everyone fears violence and is scared of death. In consideration of all life, do not kill and do not make others kill."

Every one of us who has received life as a human being, no matter the reason, must be ensured equally of human rights, and no one's life should be threatened. In reality, however, conflicts and terrorist attacks have occurred everywhere in the world and for many people, their right to live and exist has been threatened. As Buddhists who aspire for peace, we must keep Sakyamuni Buddha's words seriously in our hearts and pursue our endeavor of contributing toward world peace and security.

During the last year, we observed the Joint Celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching at Hongwanji, Kyoto for a total of 30 days, divided into 5 sessions during the period from March 29 to May 21. On this occasion, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who came to Japan to attend, as well as those who supported it in various ways. This celebratory event could be realized only because our predecessors have cherished the Jodo Shinshu teaching as their spiritual foundation for many years no matter when or where they were, and carefully transmitted it to us today.

Let us, too, continue listening to the teaching as the center of our life while cherishing each day.

January 1, 2024

OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

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。

昨年も世界各地で地震・洪水・山火事など様々な災害が起こり、多くの方が被災されました。特にハワイ・マウイ島における山火事ではラハイナ本願寺の本堂が全焼し、メンバーの方々の被害も報告されています。ここに災害によってお亡くなりになられたすべての方々に謹んで哀悼の意を表しますとともに、被災された皆さまに心よりお見舞い申し上げます。皆さまが一日も早く、日常の生活を取り戻されますことを願っております。

また、2022年2月に始まったロシア連邦によるウクライナ侵攻はいまだに続いており、2023年10月以来、イスラエルとパレスチナの武力衝突では関係国を巻き込んで、民間人を含む多くの犠牲者が出ています。私がいま思い起こしますのは、「すべての者は暴力におびえ、すべての者は死をおそれる。己が身にひきくらべて、殺してはならぬ。殺さしめてはならぬ。」(『ダンマパダ』第129偈)というお釈迦様のお言葉です。

この世に生を受けた私たちは、いかなる理由があろうとも等しく人権が保障され、命が脅かされるようなことがあってはなりません。しかし、現実には世界各地で紛争やテロが勃発し、生存の権利が脅かされている人々が数多くおられます。平和主義を掲げる仏教徒である私たちは、お釈迦様のお言葉を深く心に刻み、国際社会の平和と安全に大きく貢献することが求められています。

さて、昨年は本願寺において3月29日より5月21日までの5期30日間にわたり、「親鸞聖人御誕生850年立教開宗800年慶讃法要」をお勤めいたしました。ご参拝くださいました皆さま、お力添えを賜りました皆さまに心より感謝申し上げます。私たちが立教開宗800年の慶讃法要をお勤めできましたことは、時代や場所を超えて多くの先人の方々が、浄土真宗のみ教えを生きる支えとして、今日まで大切に受け継いでこられたからに他なりません。

これからもみ教えを聞き、それを支えとして、一日一日を大切に過ごしてまいりましょう。

2024年1月1日

浄土真宗本願寺派
門主 大谷光淳





Dear Dharma Friends,

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we are reminded of the ever-flowing river of time, carrying us forward on the journey of life. In the spirit of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, let us welcome the dawn of 2024 with hearts full of gratitude and compassion.

In the Pure Land teachings, we find solace in the boundless compassion of Amida Buddha, whose light illuminates our paths even in the darkest moments. In this past year we have lost many dharma friends. Long-time members such as Sam

Konosu, Noris Taguchi, Marie Hiroshima, TJ Nakamura, Shirley Higa, Ted Koyata and Yumiko Osaka will be missed greatly. I personally continue to grieve the loss of Akira Ichikawa who was a real role-model for me as a person with deep humility and compassion. We will miss them all. As we reflect on the past year, let us express deep gratitude for the countless moments of awakening, learning, and growth that have shaped our individual and collective journeys.

May the gentle wisdom of the Dharma guide us as we navigate the uncertainties of the future, embracing each moment with mindfulness and an open heart. Let the Nembutsu be our constant companion, a melody of refuge that resonates within us, reminding us of the interconnectedness of all beings.

In the coming year, may our Sangha flourish, fostering a community where the seeds of compassion and understanding can sprout and bloom. Let us reach out to one another with kindness and support, creating a refuge of warmth and acceptance for all who seek the path of awakening. I am extremely grateful for the on-going support of the sangha and community members. While the retirement of Izumi sensei has had a deep impact on our membership, we will continue to receive his guidance.

As we set intentions for the year ahead, may we aspire not only for personal well-being but also for the well-being of all sentient beings. Let our actions be a testament to the teachings of Jodo Shinshu, radiating the light of wisdom and compassion in every corner of our lives.

In the words of Shinran Shonin, "Entrust yourself to the Buddha completely and remain steadfast in your efforts." May the coming year be a journey of entrusting, a continuous awakening to the boundless grace that surrounds us.

Wishing you a joyous New Year filled with peace, wisdom, and the boundless compassion of Amida Buddha.

Namo Amida Butsu,

Dr. Roland Ikuta, Minister
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA
470-40 St S, Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5
403.327.1260 btsaboard@gmail.com

BTSA Minister
Rev. Dr. Roland Ikuta

Minister Hours
Wednesdays 9 AM – 5 PM
Thursdays 12 PM – 5 PM
Fridays 9 AM – 5 PM
Saturdays 9 AM – 2 PM
Sundays 9 AM – 2 PM

revroland@shaw.ca
Cell 403.360.8400
Home 403.317.0078

www.thebtsa.com

UPDATE from the Board of Directors

Greetings from the Board! We hope you enjoyed a happy holiday season.

Ho-onko/January Shotsuki Service and the BTSA New Year's Party will be held on January 7th, 2024 at 2 pm. Please find the link to the live stream below:

https://youtube.com/live/H_fvF1KR8?feature=share

Roland Sensei will be away from January 10th to 30th. Gubenco Sensei (from Calgary Buddhist Temple) and Izumi Sensei have agreed to cover funeral services, if needed. The Sunday

service on January 14th and 28th will be recorded, featuring Roland Sensei. On January 21st, our Sunday service will be a recording from another temple (perhaps Steveston Buddhist Temple).

There are upcoming fun plans in 2024 for family events and the Ikigomi group - stay tuned.

Kaikyoshi will be presented to Roland Sensei at the JSBTC's Annual General Meeting this spring. Congratulations Roland Sensei!

REGULAR EVENTS

Minyo Dance Mondays @ 6:30 - 8pm

January 8 - February 26, 2024

Contact Brenda Ikuta

brenda.ikuta63@gmail.com 403.317.0078

Study Class Saturdays @ 10:30am

Everyone welcome with no fee. Study about the teaching of the Nembutsu. Confirm date availability before coming.

No classes January 13, 20 & 27.

Contact bobmuskovich@gmail.com or revroland@shaw.ca

Meditation Wednesdays @ 9:30am

in-person and online.

January 10 - February 28, 2024

To register contact Vickie Macarther spiritiyoga@shaw.ca

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2024 Chow Mein Supper correction: After exploring possible dates for a spring chow mein supper, the committee couldn't find a good one...we are a busy Sangha! We are now looking at the fall in 2024 for our next supper. Alan Tanaka has generously volunteered to take the lead for this event. He will certainly not be alone in this endeavor; he will be supported and encouraged by experienced and capable chow mein supper committee members and community volunteers!

CASINO

The BTSA will be hosting two Casinos in 2024:

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 and Wednesday, May 15, 2024.

We will need 18 volunteers to work afternoon shifts, 1:00 - 8:00 pm and 8:00 pm - 4:00 am

Please contact:

Sachi Scharf, 403-915-6776, scharf1@shaw.ca

or Emily Stitt, 403-380-6683, emistitt@hotmail.com

Visits to Seniors

Roland Sensei is trying to make regular visits to seniors who are either at home or in a care facility. This is particularly for those who would find it hard to come to the temple on a regular basis. If you know of a senior who would like a visit from the BTSA minister, please let Roland Sensei know about where they are. Visits will not occur during January but will recommence in February, on Friday afternoons.

Roland Sensei's email is revroland@shaw.ca or call his cell 403-360-8400

2024 TOBAN SCHEDULE

Jan	Toban 4	June	Toban 2
Feb	Toban 2	July	Toban 1
March	Toban 1	Sept	Toban 3
April	Toban 3	Oct	Toban 4
May	Toban 4	Nov	Toban 1

CHAIR/AV SCHEDULE January & February

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

Jan 01

NEW YEAR'S SERVICE

Andrew Ichikawa, AV

Jan 07

HO-ONKO & SHOTSUKI @ 2 PM

Bob Muskovich

Andrew Ichikawa, AV

Jan 14

Harry Sugimoto

Kynan Ono, AV

Jan 21

Kynan Ono or TBA, AV

Jan 28

Val Boras

Bob Muskovich, AV

Feb 04

NIRVANA DAY, SHOTSUKI

PET APPRECIATION

Wayne Tsukishima

Andrew Ichikawa, AV

Feb 11

Sheila Oishi

Kynan Gordon, AV

Feb 18

Seiji Hilgersom

David Major, AV

Feb 25

David Major

Brenda Ikuta, AV

JANUARY 7 Ho-onko and Shotsuki service

Observance of Ho-onko is scheduled for January 7 at 2 p.m. at the temple, followed by the annual new year's party with a meal and bingo in the multipurpose room. Everyone is welcome!

Ho-onko commemorates the death of Shinran Shonin, the acknowledged founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, in his 90th year.

A note in the Nikkei Tapestry website describing the life of Japanese-Canadians in southern Alberta gives a detailed historical insight to ho-onko in the area:

“The Hoonko, held in December and January, is a memorial service for the founder of the Buddhist sect Jodo Shinshu, St. Shinran, a son of a nobleman of the Fujiwara clan who was born on January 16, 1173.

“In the 1930s in Raymond, Hoonko used to be held over two days--all day Saturday and Saturday night service until midnight-- children took blankets to the temple and slept there. In the morning, the ladies would make breakfast of rice and miso soup with another service starting around 7 a.m.

“After breakfast, there was chanting of some of the important works of Shinran Shonin (which means Saint in Japanese) until noon and then all went home. Most Buddhists in Ontario, British Columbia and southern Alberta follow the Jodo shinshu teachings.”

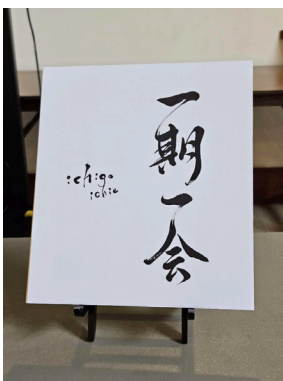
- Article used from 2018 Hikari edition

Japanese Tea Ceremony at the Temple

On December 27th, Sheila Oishi and her sister, Joyce, invited four groups at different times to share a bowl of matcha tea and sweets. Participants were very grateful to Sheila and Joyce for sharing their time and expertise, and creating an informative and serene experience.

Joyce is a student in the Urasenke tradition of chado (Japanese tea ceremony) and enjoys introducing others to a world in which savoring tea and sweets is linked to centuries of art. Joyce noted how the tea ceremony can be related to an array of Japanese arts and practices including flower arrangement, calligraphy and brocade. She spoke of the origins of the ceremony in Japan and essential figures, the significance and diversity of tea rooms/spaces, and the tea or matcha itself.

Sheila provided beautiful and tasty sweets. The gelatin-like texture was created with a seaweed base. Sheila's creations were based on her interpretation of the Southern Alberta environment, taking into consideration, colour, season and the shape of the mountains.



Ichigo Ichie
Treasure each encounter,
for it only comes once

Calligraphy by Kajira Itsugai Roshi, former Chief Abbot of Myoshin-ji
Translated by Thomas Kirchner

2024 Membership Form

ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE AT THEBTSA.COM

Full Membership
(\$100 for each member)

Student Membership*

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Home Address: _____

City, Province, Postal Code: _____

Home#: _____ Cell#: _____

Email: _____

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. 20 – 150

Shotsuki Donations December 2023

Anonymous Cash Donation
Dorene (Keiko) Gordon
Neil Hinatsu
Gene and Hilda Horii
Terry Horii
Rumiko Ibuki
Andrew Ichikawa & Tahirih Rempel
Gary & Beverly McIlroy
Thomas & Mariko Mura
Jim Nakagawa
Shig & Katie Nakagawa
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
Setsuko Ohno
Heidi Oishi
Chiyeko (Chec)Robinson
Emily Stitt
Harry Sugimoto
Sachiko Taguchi
Alan & Margaret Tanaka
Eichi & Betty Tanaka
Glen & Pamela Tanaka
Masaye Tanaka
June Terakita
Bill Teshima
George Tokuda
Jim, Marion and Shannon Tomiyama

Other Donations December 2023

Anonymous Cash Donation
John & Donna Dubbelboer
Paul & Shirley Goto
Helen Hikita
Rumiko Ibuki
Dr Roland & Brenda Ikuta
Lincong Kong
Sachi Scharf
Alan and Margaret Tanaka
Glen & Pamela Tanaka
Mitsuru Ken and Midori Jane Tanaka
Yukiko Yoshizumi

Funeral Donations December 2023

Estate of Yumiko Mary Osaka
Lois Hattori
Lois Hinz
Gail Ikebuchi
Judy M. Irvine
Suyeko Kanegawa
Karen Mizushima
Diane Mukai
Shioko & Sadao Mukai
Tom & May Mukai
Shelley Munro
Ken & Vickie Nakagama
Shig & Katie Nakagawa
Kenny & Shoko Nakatani

Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Tak & Jan Okamura
Doreen G. Osaka
Doug Osaka
Evelyn Osaka
Larry Osaka
Roy & Pat Sassa
Tomiko Sugimoto
Sachiko Taguchi
Brian Tajiri
Craig Tajiri
Fugi Takeda
Betty Taniguchi
Masae Taniwa
June Terakita
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
Tak & Yoko Tsujita
Wayne & Amy Tsukishima
Sandy Wiest

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.

Joya-no-kane

除夜の鐘

The BTSA, in collaboration with Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, held its annual “Year End Bell Ringing” on December 31 at 7 p.m. to welcome a new year.

The weather felt balmy, as it had for all of December, and the Garden had no snow to reflect the elaborate lighting throughout. Warmer temperatures did allow for easier walking without fear of slipping on ice! And the Garden was busy with people, including many temple members.

Sensei Roland chanted as Izumi Sensei greeted bell ringers and handed out small Japanese oranges. As Izumi Sensei wrote previously: “Joya” means to eliminate a passing year. Participants strike the Bell 108 times, the number representing our blind passions which will never disappear from us as long as we live. Therefore, we quietly listen to the sound of the bell and reflect on the passing year with gratitude, and anticipate the new year with hope.





JANUARY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	10:30 am New Year's Service 1	2	3	4	5	10:30am Study Class* 6
2 pm Ho-onko Shotsuki Memorial Service followed by meal* 7	6:30pm Minyo Dance 8	9	9:30am Meditation 10	11	12	13
10:30 am Regular Service* (Roland Sensei away) 14	6:30pm Minyo Dance 15	16	9:30am Meditation 17	18	19	20
10:30 am Regular Service* (Roland Sensei away) 21	6:30pm Minyo Dance 22	23	9:30am Meditation 24	25	26	27
10:30 am Regular Service* (Roland Sensei away) 28	6:30pm Minyo Dance 29	30	9:30am Meditation 31			

FEBRUARY: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						10:30am Study Class* 1
10:30 am Shotsuki Memorial, Nirvana Day, Pet Appreciation Service* 4	6:30pm Minyo Dance 5	6	9:30am Meditation 7	8	9	10:30am Study Class* 10
10:30 am Regular Service* 11	6:30pm Minyo Dance 12	13	9:30am Meditation 14	15	16	10:30am Study Class* 17
10:30 am Regular Service* 18	6:30pm Minyo Dance 19	20	9:30am Meditation 21	22	23	10:30am Study Class* 24
10:30 am Regular Service* 25	6:30pm Minyo Dance 26	27	9:30am Meditation 28	29		