

Hikari the Light



July 2020

My life has now reached the fullness of its years. It is certain that I will go to birth in the Pure Land before you, so without fail I will await you there. - Shinran

Recently, I had a gastroscopy and colonoscopy to check my internal organs. My family doctor recommended these tests, saying, "You might have colon cancer or stomach cancer."

In my mind I thought it was good my wife was not with me. The doctor said, "Well, modern medical technology is highly developed, you don't need to think about it too much." On the day of the procedure, I was lying on the hospital bed. The nurse briefly explained what I was going to go through. Soon, I was given anesthesia. I did not know how long I was on the bed but I heard nurse calling my name.

Then, I woke up. I asked her if the cancer was found. "No" the nurse said. My family doctor told me, "You have mild chronic inflammation in your stomach. Go to a pharmacist to get four kinds of medication for two weeks, then you should be all right." On the way home I thought I was given another precious life.

We often think death is unusual and extraordinary, while living here and now is usual, *atarimae* in Japanese. This is perhaps, the normal way of thinking. This kind of way of thinking, however, is called upside-down-view from the eyes of the Buddha. Through my experience, I appreciate that living here today is not *atarimae* but extraordinary.

I heard the following story: Someone asked a Buddhist minister to write something, a daily reminder for him. The minister pondered for a while and wrote on a paper: *Grandparents die, parents die, I die and children die*. The man said, "Could you please write something different? This makes me depressed." "I see," saying the minister and then he wrote on another paper, *Children die, I die, parents die and grandparents die*. Looking at this, the man cried out, "This is even more depressing. Please write something better." The minister quietly

asked the man, "Which paper would you like to take?" The man suddenly realized what the minister meant: the severe reality of life. Living and dying is not the matter of somebody else. We, each of us, are living in it. We should be grateful for our life here and now instead thinking *atarimae*, as a matter of course.

Many of our *issei* forbearers, the first generation of Japanese descendants, who listened to the dharma of the nembutsu well, accepted life as it was while they lived hard lives. There was no good day and no bad day for them. Life just continued on and on and they appreciated it, reciting *namo amida butsu* in gratitude. They took death as natural and ordinary in the light of Amida's boundless compassion. For them, every day was extraordinary and precious.

Of course, they cried when someone they love died. They must have been lonely when they faced their own death and parting. It is human nature. They knew that people suffered being human. But amid their suffering and grief they remembered the dharma of the nembutsu, great compassion of Amida Buddha, and accepted quietly and gratefully the changing nature of human life as it is. And at the end of life, they knew they would be born in Amida's world, the world of immeasurable life.

Like the Buddhist *issei*, we must realize and appreciate that we have been constantly nurtured by Buddha's wisdom and compassion, expressed in the call of *namo amida butsu*. Consequently, we truly understand and accept that death is natural and our life now is extraordinary and something about which we can always be grateful.

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

お盆

今年は新型コロナウイルスが、いまだに解決がつかず、お盆も例年のようにお寺の本堂に一同が集まってお参りをすることが出来ません。本当に残念に思います。特にこの度は、例年にもまして23件の初盆に当たるご遺族の方々がおられます。政府の方針に従い、何組かに分け二日間にわたって法要が営まれます。(詳細はお寺からの報告をお読みください。)物事が順調に運んでいるときは、それを当たり前と、感謝の気持ちもなく受け止め、一旦、自分に不自由で不都合なことが起これば、「なぜ」と不満や愚痴が出てきます。このように、自分中心に世の中を見たり、感じたりする私たちが「愚かな凡夫」と智慧の仏様は観られるのです。その智慧の眼から慈悲の心を起こされ、仏様は、いつでも、どこでも、どんな時にも、私たちに寄り添って心配し、私たちの自己中心の殻を照らし続け、より大きな、明るく、広い世界へと導いて下さっています。お仏壇の前に坐るとき、自分の小さな世界が知らされ、仏様に帰依する心を芽生えさせて下さるのです。お盆には仏様の心を聞かせて頂きましょう。

合掌 泉康雄



B TSA Minister: Rev. Yasuo Izumi
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470-40 St S • Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5
403.327.1260 • www.theB TSA.com

Obon Services are going ahead at BTSA

Due to the large number of Sangha members who have passed away this past year (26 members) the BTSA is planning to proceed with in-person Obon services on July 18th and 19th. The services will be limited to 50 people at each service so there will need to be several services held during those 2 days. The plan is to have a service at 10 AM and at 2 PM each day. As the services need to have limited numbers, all participants will have to register to attend via Signup Genius or by contacting Roland Ikuta (403-317-0078, rolikuta@shaw.ca). Only people who are registered for the specific service will be allowed to attend. There will be a screening process on entering the temple and hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes will be available. Priority will be given to those who are observing Hatusbon (the first Obon after a family member has passed away). All Hatusbon families will be contacted in advance by members of the BTSA. It is hoped that the service will also be available live via YouTube.

Even with three people functioning as screeners it will take 30 minutes to screen all participants so people will be asked to come at least 20 minutes prior to the service. **All participants are asked to bring their own masks and to wear them during the service. If participants have any symptoms consistent with a COVID infection they will not be allowed into the temple.** Consistent with the public health guidelines there will be no singing or chanting, nor offering of incense due to high touch point risks. Also, there will be no meal after the services.

The traditional grave side services are cancelled this year due to the high number of participants. If you wish, please arrange for a private visit to the cemetery on your own. There will not be grave side services or Obon services offered at the rural locations such as Taber, Raymond etc. Please plan to attend the service at the BTSA. If you have any questions please contact Roland Ikuta at (403-317-0078 or rolikuta@shaw.ca).

No services in August

The BTSA has reopened for services in a modified fashion (funerals and OBON). The BTSA traditionally closes after the Obon service until September and the board of directors has decided that we will continue to observe this tradition. There will be no services and limited activities during the month of August. As there will be further communication needed to inform all sangha members on the opening of the temple in September there will be a shorter version of the Hikari produced for August.

For further information about the Obon service please see the accompanying article.

Joint Online Obon Service Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada



SATURDAY, JULY 18

10 am British Columbia
11 am Alberta
12 pm Manitoba
1 pm Ontario and Quebec

Chanting led by Senseis
Dharma Talk (English) Rev. Robert Gubenco [Calgary]
(Japanese) Rev. Yasuo Izumi [BTSA]
Three Treasures and Golden Chain led by our Tokudo Senseis

- The service is for members of JSBTC affiliated temple members, and it will be held via Zoom.
- All attendees need a computer with an internet connection.
- Please set up in a quiet area that you can be free from any outside disturbances or distractions.
- Please bring your onenju if you have one.
- Service approximately takes 40 minutes.
- Service material is displayed on the screen during the service.
- Your generous donation to your local temple is appreciated.

Registration Link

- You can use your phone with camera and Ipad to scan the QR code
- Registration is due by Saturday, July 11th, 2020**
- Space is limited so I recommend registering as early as possible.
 - If you have any question, please contact (Rev. Tatsuya Aoki)
rev.aoki@gmail.com

Tatsuya Aoki, Bishop
Jodo Shinshu
Buddhist Temple of Canada



Scan me!
QR Code

OBON Memories

Although abbreviated obon services are scheduled for the temple in July, there will not be a bon odori for the second year running at the Galt Gardens or obon get-together. Last year's odori was held in the temple because of inclement weather. A reception followed the obon service.

To remember the season, please look over the selected photos from the 2019 bon odori at the temple and the service reception.



Taiko Opening



Exuberant dancers



Mayor Spearman joins in



Reception preparation and clean up



Enjoying a meal together



We need your email!

During the COVID crisis it was determined that we only have 89 email addresses for those who are temple members. Our usual method of communication has been via the Hikari news letter but with the rapid changes and frequent decisions a once per month communication has not been sufficient. To help us with more efficient communication please submit your email to Val Boras: vfboras@live.ca

Temple Environs

The open spaces around the BTSA have gradually disappeared with new structures being built and occupied. The closest—directly in front of the temple main entrance—is unfinished and obstructs the southern view. At present, there is an gaping space in the building facing the temple.

An adjoining sign advertises an office building and the remaining open area space seems to be that between the sign itself and the building.

Jodo Shinshu teaches change and impermanence are central to life and there are examples of those lessons right before us.



East of the temple, looking southwesterly



Gaping space facing temple main doors

REGULAR (VIRTUAL) EVENTS

Zoom meetings Thursdays @ 7pm (8-16 people online)

Explore Buddhism classes online Saturdays @ 2pm

Podcasts every other week

Monthly Shotsuki service on YouTube

Daily quotations from BDK on BTSA facebook page

How to cope with COVID as a Buddhist

BTSA Facebook page and YouTube

Further further information contact Roland Ikuta

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences

Tadao (Bill) Nagai (97) passed away on June 18, 2020

JSBTC WOMEN'S FEDERATION

Due to COVID-19 and unprecedented times, the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) Women's Federation (WF) was unable to hold their national Annual Meeting last April. Member temples cast voting ballots via email and resulted in the following:

1. With the need to increase the number of qualified ministers, the WF approved to provide financial support in the amount of \$10,000 towards the ministerial education/study for Rev. Hirano, a future, new minister here in Canada.
2. Proposed 2021/2022 Budgets were accepted with modifications.
3. WF Leadership Committee for another 2 year term: June Asano, Darlene Rieger, and Myra Takasaki

In gassho,
Donna Dubbelboer
WF Delegate Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta



Office space sign on only open area left

Requests to BTSA Members The BTSA board is asking members to renew their membership for 2020 if they have not done so already. The membership form may be found in the Hikari. Please mail your completed membership for and remittance to the BTSA Treasurer, 470 40th St. S., Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 3Z5.

On another note re: finances, the board request members to consider donating to the Temple, if able. Our major fundraising activities could not take place due to COVID restrictions but our expenses continue (payroll and utilities).

COVID precautions

Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders state in the June 22, 2020 *Guidance for Places of Worship*:

“It is important that places of worship understand that the potential for spread of infection during gatherings is very high, and several large super-spreading events globally have taken place in faith-based gatherings. To best prevent the spread of COVID-19, places of worship are encouraged to continue hosting services and faith-based activities online or through creative mechanisms such as drive-in services. Social activities such as communal dinners or lunches that would normally occur alongside faith-based activities or events should be avoided at this time.”

The Board of Directors takes these precautions seriously in making their decisions to open up to larger gatherings such as funerals and Obon service. Attendees must also be thoughtful in their decisions to attend these gatherings and use safe practice during these events.

Sign of the Times

The physical BTSA building has been shuttered going on three months, but inside there is a new attraction—truly a sign of the times. A display of masks sits atop the front foyer case containing Jodo Shinshu items. Please consider purchasing one the next time you're in the temple.



COVID-19 INFORMATION

HOW TO WEAR A NON-MEDICAL MASK

Non-medical masks, including homemade cloth masks, can help prevent the spread COVID-19. They are another tool to use in places where it's difficult to keep two metres from other people for extended periods of time – such as public transit, grocery stores, pharmacies, hair salons, airplanes and some retail shops.

Masks do not replace proper hygiene, physical distancing or isolation to prevent the spread.

SAFELY PUTTING A MASK ON

- 1 Wash/sanitize your hands.
- 2 Inspect the mask, holding it by the ties or loops. Discard if damaged or dirty.
- 3 Open fully to cover from the bridge of your nose to your chin.
- 4 Adjust the mask to your face so there are no gaps on the side.
- 5 If mask has stiff edge, pinch to close gaps between nose and mask.
- 6 Keep your nose, mouth and chin covered at all times. Avoid touching the mask.

SAFELY TAKING OFF A MASK

- 1 Wash/sanitize your hands.
- 2 Remove it from the back by releasing ties or loops. Do not touch the front of the mask.
- 3 Discard the mask immediately if disposable. Wash thoroughly if reusable.
- 4 Wash/sanitize your hands.
- 5

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WEARING AND CARING FOR YOUR MASK

alberta.ca/masks



COVID-19 INFORMATION

HELP RELAUNCH, SAFELY

**Prevention starts with awareness.
Be informed on how you can protect
yourself and others from COVID-19:**

- Isolate if you're feeling sick
- When out, maintain physical distancing of 2 metres
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap
- Cover coughs and sneezes and stay home if you are sick
- Avoid touching your face
- Wear a mask in public places where keeping a distance of 2 metres is difficult

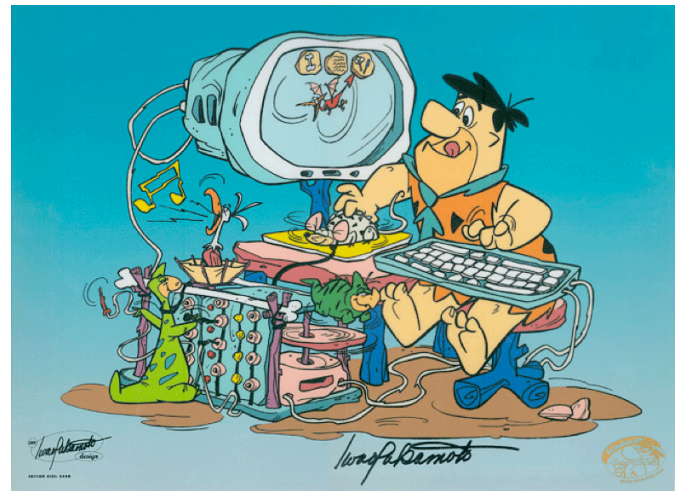
STAY INFORMED

alberta.ca/covid19



Summary of the Virtual Temple Picnic

Thanks to everyone who attended or tried to attend the Virtual Temple Picnic on Sunday, June 21. There were 29 participants who gathered on Zoom, including three people from Toronto, one from Hamilton and one from Nelson. Izumi Sensei and Kynan Gordon provided us with a short service and dharma talk from the temple. Instead of our traditional potluck we had a virtual 'food share' with images and recipes. We then had the traditional Bingo games with several prizes sent to winners via email. Thanks to *Nakagama's Japanese Foods and Giftware* for donating a number of sushi packages for prizes.



Still feels like 'Flintstone's values in a Jetson world'.

Marlene shared "Dad's Cookies" (in honor of Father's Day)

1 cup butter, room temperature	2 eggs
3 cups brown sugar, packed	1 tsp vanilla
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour	1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda	1 cup angel flake coconut
½ tsp salt	

2 cups quick cooking rolled oats (not instant)

- Grease cookie tins; preheat oven to 375F (190C)
- Beat butter, eggs, sugar and vanilla together until they are light and fluffy.
- Sift flour with baking powder, soda and salt and stir them into the first mixture. Blend well
- Stir in coconut and rolled oats.
- Drop heaping teaspoonfuls onto cookie sheets
- Bake for 10 minutes; makes 48

Brenda shared "Chicken Saifun Salad" from the Raymond 'Delicious Memories Cook Book' originally submitted by Reyko Nishiyama

1 head lettuce	2 green onions
2 oz saifun (bean threads)	2 tsp sesame seeds
2 tsp sliced almonds, roasted skin on	
1 or 2 chicken breasts	

Dressing: 2 Tbsp sugar	1 tsp salt
½ tsp MSG	½ tsp black pepper
¼ c salad oil	3 Tbsp vinegar
3 drops sesame seed oil	

Day before or earlier: Deep fry saifun noodles in clean oil. Temperature of oil should be quite hot and the noodles will puff up quickly. Fry a few strands at a time. Put into brown paper bag to absorb extra oil. Cool.

Break lettuce into bite-sized pieces. Cut green onions into 1" pieces. Slice lengthwise into thin slivers. Boil/steam/microwave chicken until done. Shred the chicken into pieces with your hands. Heat a heavy frying pan and toss chicken pieces until slightly dry (do not over-dry). Season chicken with salt and pepper. Cool.

Mix lettuce, onions, chicken meat and saifun threads together. Toss well with dressing. Garnish top of salad with almonds and sesame seeds. "This is a favorite of our church's pot luck suppers."

Recipes to Share

Keiko shared "Rhubarb Curd Tarts"

Filling: 2 eggs

1 cup sugar
2 cups rhubarb
1/4 cup water
2 Tbsp lemon juice
1/4 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed

- Whisk eggs & 3/4 cup sugar in large bowl.
- Combine rhubarb, 1/4 cup sugar and water & gently boil til soft, 7-8 minutes.
- Whisk til smooth & add lemon juice
- Slowly add to egg mixture, return to pan & cook til thick, about 10 min
- Remove from heat, mix in butter and chill.
- Note "I didn't taste a really strong rhubarb flavor"

Shortbread Tarts (Best of Bridge)

- Use tiny muffin tins (approx. 1 ½" diameter; yields 3 doz)
- 1 cup butter
- ½ cup icing sugar
- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 Tbsp cornstarch

Mix ingredients in mixmaster. Don't roll but pat into muffin tins with your fingers to form shells. Prick the bottoms with a fork and bake 20 minutes at 300-325F. During baking time, prick bottoms again if the shells puff up. These may be made in large quantities and frozen.

2020 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 to June 19 - 150

Hanamatsuri & Obon Donations

May & June 2020

- Shirley Higa
- Aki Kimoto
- Hiroshi Kitagawa (Hanamatsuri)
- Hiroshi Kitagawa (Obon)
- Kinuko Matsuno
- Lilly Oishi
- Sheila Oishi
- Fugi Takeda

Total - \$600

Shotsuki Donations

June 2020

- Joyce Adachi
- Vivian Beckingham
- Shinako (Sheila) Higa
- Shirley Higa
- Chizuko Kimura
- Hiroshi Kitagawa
- Heidi Oishi
- Lilly Oishi
- Sheila Oishi
- Tomiko Sugimoto
- Tsuyako Tajiri
- Fugi Takeda

Total - \$935

Other Donations

June 2020

- Joyce Adachi
- Roy & Itoko Akune
- John & Rita Aoki
- Richard & Kristin Bushley
- Bonnie Fujimoto
- Mitsuyo Fujimoto
- Teresa Fujimoto
- Judy Fukushima
- Tsuyoshi & Mariko Hironaka
- Rumiko Ibuki
- Akira Ichikawa
- David & Jenna Ichikawa
- Laura Ichikawa & Jack Howland

- Gail Ikebuchi
- Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
- Fran Kato
- Gene Kawade
- Hiroshi Kitagawa
- Mike Kitagawa
- Susan Kitagawa
- Sharon Kitamoto
- Milnes & Noriko Kurashige
- Judith & Yoshio Nakamura
- Reyko Nishiyama
- Mitsuko Oga
- Noriko Oga
- Heidi Oishi
- Lilly Oishi
- Sheila Oishi
- Sachi Scharf
- Emily Stitt
- Tomiko Sugimoto
- Noris & Sachiko Taguchi
- Brian Tajiri
- Tsuyako Tajiri
- Robert & Judy Takaguchi
- Fugi Takeda
- Trent Takeyasu & Veronica Horn
- Ken & Midori Tanaka
- Carolyn Terakita & Dr. Leigh J. Morris
- Jim, Marion & Shannon Tomitaya
- Judy Tsukijima
- Wayne & Amy Tsukishima
- Irene Yamamoto

Total - \$4,726.80

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.



Buddha in Our Garden

The warm June morning bathes the BTSA Buddha in the garden in sunshine, even with the temple closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Not quite the Bodhi tree but the apple tree provides cover for the welcoming statue.

