

Hikari the Light



June 2021

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 Shonin (1173-1263)



Reflecting deeply on our life, it is a series of parting and separation. We must part from our parents, brothers and sisters one day. Husband

and wife must part from each other no matter how much they love each other. Sometimes a child leaves before parents. Furthermore, when time comes all forms of life will disappear from our own eyes. Meeting is indeed the beginning of parting.

Where are we going after we die? In the sutra it says: **People are ignorant and foolish, and yet they think themselves wise. They do not know from where life comes or to where death leads.**

Therefore, we must humbly listen to the Buddha, the awakened one.

Some people say, “Well, when we die that is it.” When I hear people say this, I say, “that’s right. Therefore, we must hear good teaching now.” Or someone, actually a scientist in Japan, once said, “When we die we will become waste.” I think this kind of observation about life is very sad. Are we living and working hard every day to become just waste?

A middle-aged mother listened to Buddha’s teachings well, and appreciated and entrusted herself to Amida’s great compassion. One day she was diagnosed with cancer. Before her passing, her daughter told her mother with tears, “Thank you mom for everything.” The

mother said, “Don’t cry. Don’t worry, dear. I will be born in the Pure Land of Amida, become a Buddha and then I will guide you to Amida’s home. You know, we will meet again in Amida’s home, Pure Land. So, you must live strong. Please listen to the story of Amida Buddha and live your life to the fullest.” The mother appreciated Amida’s vow by which Amida fulfilled the Pure Land for each of us who are in the world delusion.

In the Amida Sutra expounded by Shakyamuni Buddha, there is a passage: The Buddha spoke: **Sariputra, the people who hear of the Pure Land should aspire to be born there. Why? It is because they will be able to meet together with good friends and teachers there.**

In Japan, many cemeteries are located in temple property. Each gravestone is upright and not flat lying on the ground as many are in the West. The front of each gravestone is engraved with the words of *namo amida butsu* or *kue-issho*, meaning “Meeting together in one place.” One place, of course, means the Pure Land, Amida’s home.

Our life, as we know, is the place where meeting is always the beginning of parting. Parting from our loved ones is always sad and painful. And yet, when we listen and hear Amida’s call of *namo amida butsu*, we realize that parting is not the end. We will meet again in the Pure Land of peace and happiness. Pure Land, Amida’s home, will become our home.

Namo amida butsu in gratitude,

Yasuo Izumi, Minister
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

皆様お元気でしょうか。

コロナ感染症が1年以上続いてい
ます。経済的にも、精神的にも不安が増して
います。我慢と忍耐が必要とされています
が、お互いを併せて乗り越えていきたい
ものです。

5月20日に雪が降りました。それから小
雨、大雨、大風と寒い日が続いています。
雪が降る前に、花の苗などを買って家の前
に植えましたが、この寒さには、苗も驚い
て花の咲くのを遅らせるでしょう。レスプ
リッジの青空がしばらく見えないのが寂し
い限りです。

5月は親鸞聖人の降誕会が営まれました。
政府の方針によりオンラインで行われ
ました。何か味気ない感じがします。ある
方が、「法話は、やはり、本堂の阿弥陀様
の前で聴聞しないと気持ちがピリッとし
ないですね。」と。これもあとしばらくの辛
抱です。

ところで、「聴聞」という字は両方とも「き
く」という漢字ですが、「聴」は意志をもって
「きく」こと。「聞」は「きこえてくる」という
意味だそうです。「聴」も「聞」も「耳」が使
われていますが、法話は、体の器官の耳を
とらうして、心に聞こえてくるもの、と言える
でしょう。本来、仏様の呼び声は本堂で聴
き、心で味わうもの、と言ってもいいので
はないでしょうか。 合掌 泉康雄



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UPDATE from the Board of Directors

I hope this update finds you all safe and well. It is hard to believe we are still in the middle of these restrictions. As these restrictions continue, there will be no significant changes to the gathering plans for at least the early part of June. As AHS makes further announcements about regulations, the BTSA board will adjust our plans.

a) In-person services and group activities remain on hold due to the prohibition on indoor gatherings. 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 (sas7@telus.net), and if you would like to join the Explore Buddhism group, contact Robert Muskovich at (bobmuskovich@gmail.com).

b) Due to ongoing technical difficulties with the zoom format, our monthly Shotsuki services will be provided via YouTube Channel. The service in June will be held on June 6th at 10:30 AM. It can be viewed live by going to our YouTube Channel or in the recorded format. Please click on the link below to access the service.
https://youtu.be/S5FrHC_fh98

c) We will likely have a lifting of some of our gathering restrictions before the dates for our Obon services and Odori dance celebrations. The tentative dates are set for July 17 and 18. At this time, it is difficult to predict what we will be able to do. The board of directors will be flexible in our decision making but will try to announce our plans by the last week in June to give everybody some warning. We may have several smaller Obon services as we were able to last year. The possibility of limited graveside services will also be reviewed. Please keep up to date by watching for emails or visiting our webpage.

d) If you have any concerns or issues about temple activities, please do not hesitate to contact Roland Ikuta (403-317-0078) or any members of our board.

Ghotanye Service May 23



Those who realize shinjin-entrusting heart, which is Other Power “revere the dharma of the nembutsu and greatly rejoice in it, and therefore are my true companions.” Such is the praise of Shakyamuni Buddha, the master of the teaching. --Shinran

On May 23 the BTSA observed the birth of Shinran--founder of Jodo Shinshu--with a virtual Ghotanye service, recorded and uploaded on its You Tube site. Shinran's birth on May 21, 1173, in Hino, Japan, occurred during Japan's Heian Period.

As Izumi sensei noted the meaning of ghotan refers to “someone whose descent and appearance from a sacred place or the world of truth” marks him as a great teacher. He said the historical Buddha's birth may properly referred to similarly.

In his dharma message, sensei distinguished “we ordinary people whose lives are based on blind passions or bonno of greed, anger and foolishness” from people like Shinran, who despite being venerated always referred to himself as an imperfect and foolish being.

“Shinran acknowledge that such foolish beings realized that Amida's call (the nembutsu) is working to liberate them to the Pure Land of Bliss,” sensei noted. He added that “Shinran taught us ‘entrusting heart’ (to Amida) is the cause of birth and recitation of namo amida butsu is the expression of our gratitude to Amida.”

Dr. Roland Ikuta emceed the service.



Screen shots of the Gotanye Service

A Reflection on Anti-Asian Violence



In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the increase in hate crimes and incidents against Asian-Canadians, Asian-Americans, and Pacific Island communities has risen significantly because of ‘reports’ that the virus originated in Asia. This is intimately connected to systemic, historic, and state-sanctioned discrimination against Asians in national and international relations. We support and stand in solidarity with the Asian communities in Canada. As a Buddhist organization, we need to be part of the solution. “The Golden Chain”, a simple, but popular Shin Buddhist reading at Dharma services, goes as follows:

I am a link in Amida’s golden chain of love that stretches around the world. I will keep my link bright and strong.

May I be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself.

May I think pure and beautiful thoughts, say pure and beautiful words, and do pure and beautiful deeds.

May every link in Amida’s golden chain of love be bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

“The Golden Chain” is written in a simple style explaining the ethical teaching of Buddhism, especially to our children. It encourages and nurtures kindness and love for all beings. It is our hope that children become aware of their inner strength to protect the lives of other people and animals. This short saying inspires not only children, but adults, to pursue the goodness of human life, through the teachings of the interdependence of all things and all living things. It reminds us of the responsibility of helping one another regardless of ethnicity or colour of our skin.

With palms together and Namō Amida Butsu,

Tatsuya Aoki, Bishop

Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada

Temple Signs During the Time of COVID-19



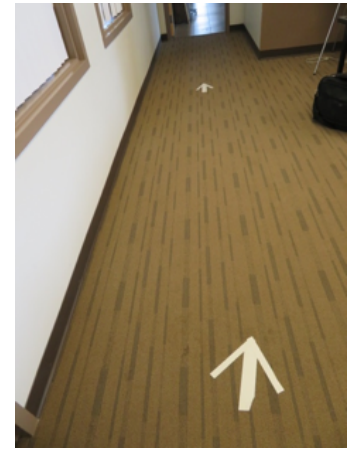
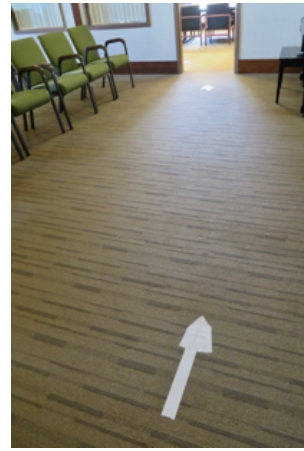
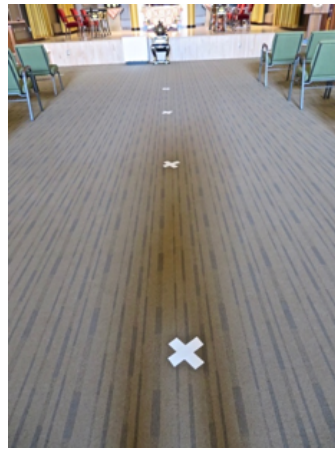
Front Entrance is closed; attendants are asked to enter through East Door



Inside signs request distancing; Entry table with hand sanitizer, masks



Requests for distancing during rare instances of temple use.



Directional floor signs toward naijin for oshoko; then arrow to temple exit via board room.

“JODO SHINSHU GONSHIKI” – “JODO SHINSHU RITUALS”

REVEREND YOSHIMICHI OUCHI

THE HOW, WHY, WHEN & WHERE OF

TRADITIONAL NAIJIN (ALTAR) ARRANGEMENT

DEMYSTIFYING CHANTING SUTRAS AND GATHAS



Part 3: DEMYSTIFYING CHANTING SUTRAS AND GATHAS

Sunday June 13, 2021

7pm ET, 6pm CT, 5pm MT, 4pm PT



Pre-registration is required.

A graduate of Gonshiki Shidosho in Kyoto, Rev.Ouchi received his licence of Tokubetsu Homuin in 2016 and is Canada’s only Ritual Specialist. Rev. Ouchi is currently head minister of the Toronto Buddhist Church.

Part 3—DEMYSTIFYING CHANTING SUTRAS AND GATHAS—Sunday June 13, 2021

7pm ET, 6pm CT, 5pm MT, 4pm PT

Chanting a sutra or verses during the Buddhist service is the most important ritual in the service. You will learn why it is important to chant. Rev Ouchi will explain the meaning of chanting and how to chant.

Q & A will follow the lecture.

Advance registration required: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAsf--trTlqGNwohRHdzFZH3PZTx-2dNai>

Presented by Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada’s Living Dharma Centre and the JSBTC Women’s Federation.

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 B.T.S.A. 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
at May 24 – 108

Hanamatsuri Donations

May 2021

Aki Kimoto
Jim & Joan Nakagawa
May Nishikawa
Kazuko Takaguchi

Total - \$355

Shotsuki Donations

May 2021

Roy Adachi
Dorene Keiko Gordon
Shinako Sheila Higa
Douglas & Susie Mikado
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
Roy and Pat Sassa
Emily Stitt
Kazuko Takaguchi
Robert & Judy Takaguchi
Fugi Takeda

Eichi & Betty Tanaka
Masaye Tanaka
Ken & Hiroko Yoshihara
Total - \$935

Other Donations

May 2021

Richard & Valerie Boras
Estate of Kay Osaka
Rumiko Ibuki
Akira Ichikawa
Rev Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
Fugi Takeda
Glen & Pamela Tanaka

Total - \$6,940

Funeral Donations

May 2021

Tobo & Hiroko Kawamoto
Mitsuko Oga
Kazuko Takaguchi
Fugi Takeda

Total - \$195

Total Donations - \$8,425

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

A Short Dharma Talk From Dharma: My Guiding Light (published in 1986)

DIFFERENT VALUES BETWEEN
CHILDREN AND ADULTS

One Sunday morning before Dharma School Service started, I gave my son, Hugh, who is three years old, a dime for offertory during the service. He did not take it but asked me for a nickel instead. I could not understand why he wanted a nickel. But then I realized why he took the nickel. It was because a nickel is much bigger than a dime.

It is understandable that a three year old child does not know how much a dime worth. He cannot tell its real value.

Of course, one day Hugh will understand what a dime really means and won't be fooled by the mere appearance any more. (Y. I.)

EXPLORE BUDDHISM

Interested in learning more about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism? These sessions are an open and free discussion in a relaxed atmosphere. You are welcome to join us on Zoom at 10:30 am to 12:00 noon every Saturday at the following link.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85281112651?pwd=dVp6VWw5WnlweVpScU14amR6WIN5dz09>

If you have any questions you can email them to yasuo123@shaw.ca



ScreenShot from May 1, 2021 Shotsuki Hoyo Service - note the memorial folders on display for members who passed away during the month of May. Izumi sensei and Dr. Roland Ikuta, ministerial assistant, are on the najin to conduct the service.