



FUJIMATSURI (Shinran Shonin's Birthday)

During the month of May, we celebrate the birthday of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu. "Shonin" is a title meaning a holy person. Shinran never used it himself. He lived 90 long years, sharing the nembutsu teaching with others. This celebration is called Fujimatsuri meaning wisteria flower festival. The wisteria flower blooms around May and June. When Shinran was born on May 21 in Kyoto, Japan, wisterias must have been in full bloom.

We do not see wisteria flowers in Alberta because of the cold weather. But at the entrance of our temple there is an artificial wisteria plant always in full bloom. It looks real. An elderly lady once came closer to it and tried to smell the flowers. But, no fragrance; then she realized it was artificial. A fake flower has no fragrance and is always beautiful. A real flower has a nice fragrance but its beauty does not last long. Is this not true? A real flower teaches us the reality of life, the life of impermanence.

When I was living in Vancouver, I saw many purple-colored wisteria flowers hanging low from archways. They were so beautiful. And yet their low-hanging growth reminds us of the attitudes of modesty and humility. No wonder we use it as an emblem of Jodo Shinshu teaching. Yes, Shinran taught us to be modest and humble all the time in the light of Amida Buddha. Shoshinge which he composed proclaims that those who are arrogant have difficulty accepting and entrusting Amida's Compassion that is working for us. Arrogance comes from ego mind, the mind that rejects Amida's compassion always shining and embracing us all.

We should try to live the way the wisteria flower blooms. So, real flowers change constantly like human beings.

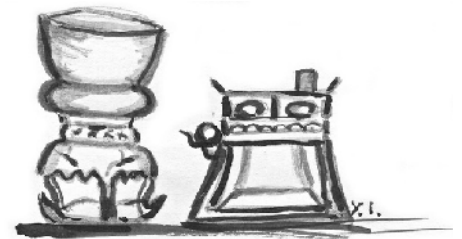
When Shinran was nine years old he went up Mt. Hiei, the Buddhist centre, with his uncle. It was late night when they met the Buddhist school's head, master Jien. The uncle asked Jien to initiate his nephew Shinran into the Buddhist monkhood. "Well, it's late. Let's put off the ordination ceremony until tomorrow", Jien replied. It is said that when Jien said this he heard an astonishing reply from young Shinran: "Cherry blossoms /That are thought/ To last till the tomorrow, May well blow away/ During night." I do not know if a nine-year-old boy really said this but it is true that our life is constantly changing. We are not able to predict what will happen tomorrow. "Don't put off to tomorrow what you can do today" is a universal teaching.

We see a cute bronze image of nine-year-old Shinran putting his hands together in gassho at our temple entrance. Some people often stroke his head every time they come to temple. So, his head is now shiny. On the opposite side facing the young Shinran is another figure of Shinran at about 50, with a straw hat and a cane. At the age of 29 he abandoned all traditional Buddhist paths as self-power and relied on the Compassionate Amida's Vow expressed in *namo amida butsu*. *Namo amida butsu* is called the *nembutsu*, a call of Amida Buddha. The Vow of Amida is to liberate all sentient beings from the world of delusion and suffering to the realm of the Pure Land, the realm of peace and serenity. Jodo Shinshu followers rely on Amida's sincere heart of compassion in their everyday life no matter how difficult the life may be.

もう5月になります。アルバータに遅い春がやってきました。5月21日は親鸞聖人のご誕生日です。身も心も晴れやかになる時期であるはずですが、コロナウイルスによる感染者が世界中に広がっています。日々、多くの方々が尊い命を失っていく様子が伝わってきます。家族と話をすることも出来ず、一人で亡くなっていかねばなりません。亡くなっていかれる方も、家族の方々も、どれほどつらく、悲しいことかと思えます。強力な薬が出来て、ウイルスが一日も早く絶滅することを、だれしも願っていることでしょう。

親鸞聖人が88歳の頃、日本中に悪疫、飢饉が広まり、日本の人口の半分近くが亡くなった、という記録があります。その折、聖人は、世の無常を説かれるとともに、無常の世に、仏の慈悲が常に働いていることに気づくよう、人々に語っておられます。

私たちは、とかく目先のことに追いかかれ、限りのある命を生きていることを忘れがちです。無常は、他人事ではありません。だからこそ、限りなき仏様の「いのち」に心を寄せて、力強く、安心して生かして頂きたいと思うのです。合掌 泉康雄



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

Coping during COVID

As I write this notice there are more than 2.2 million people who have been infected by COVID 19 and more than 150,000 deaths worldwide. It is truly an unprecedented event in our lifetime. As we try to physically isolate and flatten the curve many of us are feeling alone, worried and scared.

This drastic change in our life style is not easy to cope with. What can we do in our daily lives to make it easier to get by? While I am not an expert in mental health I have some suggestions that might help. These are just some ideas that I am practicing and have heard other people trying.

If you are feeling particularly anxious to the point where you cannot sleep or eat, or feel you are at the end of your rope, then you should **seek professional help**. There are many resources available on the Alberta Health Services website. There is also the mental health hot line 1-877-303-2642, and the children's' mental health hotline 1-800-688-6868 . You should also contact your family doctor. They can talk to you over the phone; make referrals to counselling services or other resources.

These are the top 5 things on my list:

1. Include humour in your daily life. Rather than ending your day with news about COVID, watch something funny such as your favourite sitcom, a comedy movie, or the *Pluto Living* YouTube videos. For a funny article there is a great one in the latest Tricycle Magazine by Matthew Abrahams (April 1st, 2020) "Newly found Scripture reveals Buddha gave a remote sermon, and Struggled with A/V issues – or thus have I (mostly) heard."

2. Go outside for a walk everyday. Being outside is very important at this time. Go for a short walk or if that's not possible, sit outside for 20-30 minutes. If you have children arrange a scavenger hunt in your back yard. You can take up Geocaching (down load the free Geocaching app) but be careful to use gloves and wash your hands if you find an item. As a Buddhist you could incorporate walking meditation in to your walks. For 20 minutes focus on your walking and recite Namu Amida Butsu with each step.

3. Journal daily. This is a time that all of us will remember. Try to write down what is happening. How are you feeling? What good thing has happened and don't just focus on the negatives. There are many who are Naikan journaling. This involves reflections on three main questions: *What have I received from others? What have I given to others? What troubles and difficulties have I caused others?* I add a fourth question to my journaling: *What can I do to help others tomorrow?*

For further information about Naikan and to take part in online learning, visit the ToDo Institute at www.todoinstitute.org

4. Meditation – There are great resources online to help with various forms of meditation. Rachel Crowder has a web site – *Present Moment Human Development* – that has many guided mindfulness meditation practices. A Buddhist version that I like is Metta or Loving Kindness meditation. This involves reciting:

- May all beings be happy and well.*
- May no harm or difficulties come to them.*
- May they live in peace and harmony.*
- May I be happy and well.*
- May no harm or difficulties come to me.*
- May I live in peace and harmony.*

Then change it to family, teachers, friends, strangers, enemies and back to all beings.

5. Recite the Nembutsu. Sit quietly and recite Namu Amida Butsu. I take refuge in Amida Buddha. This helps remind me of the great compassionate vow of Amida. It also reminds me of all those people who have had such a profound influence on me. I often see envision my grandparents in front of the Butsudan reciting the Nembutsu and that brings me comfort.

I hope these ideas help. If you have other ideas please let me know (403-317-0078) or at my email Rolikuta@shaw.ca

ACTION CALENDAR: MEANINGFUL MAY 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p>"Start Where You Are. Use What You Have. Do What You Can" ~ Arthur Ashe</p>				<p>1 Take a minute to remember what really matters to you and why</p>	<p>2 Do something meaningful for someone you really care about</p>	<p>3 Reconnect with nature today, even if you're stuck indoors</p>
<p>4 Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do</p>	<p>5 Send friends a photo of a time you all enjoyed together</p>	<p>6 Take a step towards one of your life goals, however small</p>	<p>7 Let someone you love know how much they mean to you</p>	<p>8 Set yourself a kindness mission. Give your time to help others</p>	<p>9 Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today</p>	<p>10 Tell someone about why your favourite music means a lot to you</p>
<p>11 What are your most important values? Use them today</p>	<p>12 Be grateful for the little things, even in difficult times</p>	<p>13 Today do something to care for the natural world</p>	<p>14 Show your gratitude to people who are helping to make things better</p>	<p>15 Find out about the values and traditions of another culture</p>	<p>16 Look around you and notice five things you find meaningful</p>	<p>17 Take a positive action to help in your local community</p>
<p>18 Hand-write a note to someone you love and send them a photo of it</p>	<p>19 Find a way to craft what you are doing to give it more meaning</p>	<p>20 Reflect on what makes you feel really valued and appreciated</p>	<p>21 Share photos of 3 things you find meaningful or memorable</p>	<p>22 Ask a loved one or colleague what matters most to them and why</p>	<p>23 Share an inspiring quote with others to give them a boost</p>	<p>24 Do something special today and revisit it in your memory tonight</p>
<p>25 Give your time to help a project or charity you care about</p>	<p>26 Recall three things you've done that you are really proud of</p>	<p>27 Today link your decisions and choices to your purpose in life</p>	<p>28 Tell someone about an event in your life that was really meaningful</p>	<p>29 Think about how your actions make a difference for others</p>	<p>30 Find three good reasons to be hopeful about the future</p>	<p>31 Look up at the sky. Remember we are all part of something bigger</p>

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind

31 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together

ON-LINE RESOURCES

BTSA website – thebtsa.com

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta Facebook page

- Daily dharma message

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta – YouTube

- Please subscribe
- This is where we are posting monthly Shotuki services and other videos.
- We are recording bi-weekly Podcasts that will be available soon, one being an interview with Izumi Sensei on his 50 years as a minister in Canada.

OTHER CANADIAN RESOURCES:

Living Dharma Centre site – bcc.ca/ldc.html

Living Dharma Centre -YouTube

- This is a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada project that has many videos online.
- Socho Aoki is posting his Sunday services here

Steveston Buddhist Temple is conducting Sunday services live via zoom. English is at 11 AM MST and the Japanese service is at noon. If you would like to be included you need an invitation from Grant Ikuta Sensei. Send him an email at grant.ikuta@gmail.com

Calgary Temple has live Face Book Services – Visit the Calgary Buddhist Temple Facebook page

U.S. RESOURCES

There are 26 temples that have their Sunday services live on YouTube or Facebook. Please visit the BCA (Buddhist Churches of America) site: buddhistchurchesofamerica.org or YouTube to find them.

Funerals During COVID 19

During the COVID pandemic the BTSA and Izumi Sensei are not able to conduct in-person funeral services. We have two options that are available if a funeral, cremation, or memorial service is desired: (1) Izumi Sensei can conduct a service using his phone (low tech option); (2) The alternative is to set up a Zoom meeting service.

We recently conducted a cremation service for a member's family. This involved the family at the funeral home, sensei at the temple, Roland in the Dharma classroom as chair, and 38 other devices on zoom. The children gave a eulogy from their own homes. There were more than 70 participants online with six people at the funeral home. The service ran smoothly with only minor problems with the audio.

If a service is desired during the COVID physical distancing measures please contact Roland Ikuta: 403-317-0078 or rolkuta@shaw.ca.

REGULAR (VIRTUAL) EVENTS

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

Explore Buddhism classes to restart online Saturdays @ 2pm in May

Podcasts every other week

Monthly Shotsuki service on YouTube

Gotanye service, May 3rd @ 2pm MDT

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

Lorita Ichikawa (79) passed away on March 28, 2020

Bonnie Aiko Ohashi (77) passed away on April 5, 2020

Shigeru Gerry Hikita (71) passed away on April 11, 2020



The bronze statue of Shinran Shonin as a boy, at the entrance of the BTSA. Please see Izumi Sensei's article on page one.

Gotan-ye (Shinran's Birthday)

Shinran, who founded the Japanese Jodo Shinshu sect of Buddhism of which BTSA is a member through the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, was born May 21, 1173, near Kyoto, Japan. As Izumi sensei's message of page 1 points out, the birthday is referred to as *Fujimatsuri*, or more generally *Gotan-ye* in Japanese.

Historically, "Shinran was a descendant of a branch of the aristocratic Fujiwara clan. While his family background could have led him to a career in the Imperial court, political fortunes brought him to the Tendai monastery on Mount Hiei at the young age of nine years," noted Dr. Alfred Bloom who taught at the University of Hawaii.

The Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin website further notes: "Shinran, at age 29, attained enlightenment...through the Vow of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life. This attainment...relying solely on the power of Amida's vow and discarding all sundry practices became the core of Shinran's teachings throughout his life."

Shinran died on Jan. 16, 1263 in Kyoto at the age of 90.

Signs of the Times 'Round the Temple

The landscape around the BTSA continues to show signs of change, in fact, the temple itself has a familiar sign because of the COVID-19 pandemic. All of the doors leading into the building have signs about the suspension of all activities until further notice.

Signs of change around the temple have continued unabated as the photographs indicate the latest construction has moved to the southern boundary of the temple's front parking lot. Physical change as a sign of impermanence isn't difficult to see, but it is only a manifestation of the Buddhist principle of transience that informs all life itself.



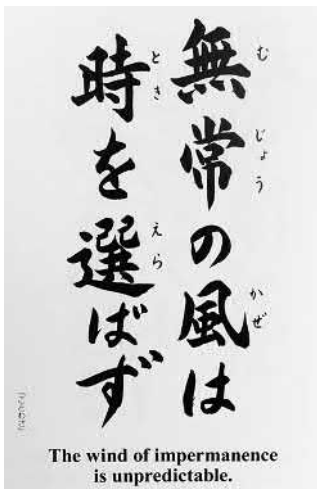
Sign of encroaching construction



No temple activities sign



Sign from the southwest on 40th St. S.



Realtor's sign showing what's further in the future

Virtual Hanamatsuri, 2020

Hanamatsuri 2020 was celebrated April 12 online as the COVID-19 pandemic forced closure of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta. Those who missed the program can visit the temple site, thebtsa.com, where the YouTube video is available and watch Kynan Gordon emcee the service.



Virtual opening for Hanamatsuri



Kynan Gordon, MC

Words to the gathas and *Juni-rai*, the sutra selected, show up on the overhead projectors in the hondo. Izumi sensei's dharma message also is included in the 50-minute long service. No hanamido, no pouring of tea over the statue of the baby Buddha.



Izumi Sensei's Message

However, check out the photos from the 2019 service shown here to help you get into the cheerful mood associated with Hanamatsuri. We had guest Rev. Candice Shibata from the Florin CA Buddhist temple give the dharma message.



Beautifully-decorated naijin



Sizeable congregation



Guest speaker Shibata sensei

Right:
MC and senseis, hanamido
Pouring sweet tea over Buddha



Left:
Guests and Members enjoying
lunch
Happy Birthday Sakyamuni!

皆さん、こんにちは。お変わりありませんか。早速ですが、毎週月曜日に皆様の

お手元に、「ザ♥絆」をお届けすることになりました。人の集り、外出が自粛され、既に3週間が経ちます。いつまでこの状態が続くのか未定であるため、毎日不安に思う方もきっといるでしょうね。「ザ♥絆」が少しでも気休めになるよう、心から

願ってお届けしたいと思います。どうぞ、宜しくお願い致します。

それにしても、まさかこんな世の中が来るなんて、誰も思ってなかったろうな。

ただ、中国の医学博士だけは知っていたと聞いています。そんな時に、私はお腹


いっぱいお餅を食べて、こたつに入りゴロゴロと寝正月をのんびりと過していたのですから。。それからたった2ヶ月後には、この世の人間は崖から突き落とされた状況になってしまいました。一瞬にして、私達の自由が奪われてしまったのです。個人的で申し訳ないのですが、夢にまで見た大好きなアーティストのコンサート、夫と再会、東に住む次男に会いに行く計画、ゼー一んぶキャンセルです。悲しくて、悔しくて、でも最近ではその感情が無くなり、家族や友人がとりあえず、健康

で無事でいることに心から感謝します。人間って本当に勝手だなと反省までしてます。動物をモルモットにしたり、これでもかと言うくらい地球を汚染して、ハイテクだの、株だの、物質的なことばかり追い、頭でっかちになり過ぎた人間、大切な心を失い、これはきっと天罰だなと、私と同じに思っている方

いる方きっといるでしょうね。もしかして地球が息苦しくなって、爆発したのでしょうか。こんな思いにふけながら自粛している私ですが、皆さんは、どんな思いで、時間を過ごされているのでしょうか



家にばかりいると、頭も体も運動不足になりますね。今日は室内でも出来る簡単な足の運動をご紹介しますね。注意:目が回ってきたらすぐに中断して下さい。

1. 椅子に浅く座ります。両足をしっかり床に着けて下さい。 
2. 足に衝撃が無いくらい大きな足踏みをして10回
3. つま先を天井にピンと向け、片足ずつ直ぐに膝の高さまで上げるを1回
4. 座った状態で、太ももをげんこつで軽くたたくを20回

テレビを観ながらでもできます。午前、午後と2回するといいでしょう。ほんの10分体操でも血行が良くなりますので、頑張ってください。

次は頭の体操です。春に関係している言葉です。一個につき10秒以内であれば合格です。それ以上時間がかっている人は、頭の体操を極力しましょうね。

はい、スタート！！

あかさおん
りのぼこい
でたゆごま
とべおんう
はたけなば

んやすひし
しちかもわ
いはぐきん
つなまはり
ぐいぐりさん

今週の美味しい話

今週は今旬の苺の話です。苺の特徴は何と言ってもビタミンCが豊富に含まれています。今特に免疫をつけて、睡眠を沢山取らなくてははいけません。100g(大の苺が3個分)当たりの含有量はレモンよりも多いほどです。苺は12月頃から出回り始めますが、旬の苺は酸味が少なく甘みがあります。日本一の品種は栃木県産の「とちおとめ」です。カナダでは、アルバータ産のClany,L'Amourと言った品種ですが、やっぱり何と言っても、リッチモンドのローカルの苺は決して形は良く無いけど、愛情たっぷり最高です。美味しい苺は表面に光沢があ

り、へたの所まで赤くなっています。ふっくらと盛り上がり、あまり大きくない物がお薦めです。苺サンドはランチにも、おやつにも持って来い。レシピは、市販の生クリーム、苺、パンで簡単に作れます。生クリームをパンに塗って、苺のへたを切って水気を取って、苺をパンに並べ、その上にまた市販の生クリームを塗ります。そしてサンドにしてパンのふちをふさぎ、サランラップでぴったり包みます。冷蔵庫に3時間置いてから、4等分にカットして出来上がり。是非、旬の苺のサンドを試してください。



本当にあった今思うと笑い話

夜中頭が痛くて、仕方無く起きて真っ暗な中キッチンに行き、ガチガチに凍ったアイスノンを冷凍庫から取り出し、頭に乗せて又寝ることにした。翌朝、何かが凄く臭くて一気に目が覚めた。びっくり、わお、枕元には解凍されたイカがあった！！



Stay Safe & Healthy !!

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 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 to April 19 - 103

Hanamatsuri Donations

April 2020

Akira & Estate of Lorita Ichikawa
David & Valerie Kunimoto
Heidi Oishi
Tak & Jan Okamura
George Tokuda

Total - \$850

Shotsuki Donations

April 2020

Rumiko Ibuki
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
Irene Sakamoto
Kazuko Takaguchi

Total - \$265

Other Donations

March 2020

Anonymous
Joyce Adachi
Susanne Amero
Kathy Cochrane
Michelle Demers
John & Donna Dubbelboer
Marg Fujita
Judy Fukushima
Randy Higa
Shinako (Sheila) Higa
Frances Hiscocks
Rumiko Ibuki
Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
David & Valerie Kunimoto
Kemi Nakabayashi
Ken & Vickie Nakagama
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
Setsuko Ohno
Heidi Oishi
Tak & Jan Okamura
Joanne Planidin
Irene Sakamoto
Eileen Sameshima
Bob & Eiko Shigehiro
Joyce Shigehiro & Trevor Van Sluys
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
Harry Sugimoto
Kazuko Sugimoto
Fuji Takeda
Wendy Takeda
Eichi & Betty Tanaka
Dr. Frances Tatebe & Ralph Arnold
Marcia Taylor
Bill & June Terakita
George Tokuda
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
John & Carole Wevers
Mark & Joan Wierzba

Total - \$2,496.65

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.

REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19. WASH YOUR HANDS.

- 1**
Wet hands with warm water
- 2**
Apply soap
- 3**
For at least 20 seconds, make sure to wash:
- 4**
Rinse well
- 5**
Dry hands well with paper towel
- 6**
Turn off tap using paper towel

Additional steps: palm and back of each hand, between fingers, under nails, thumbs

1-833-784-4397

@canada.ca/coronavirus