

# Hikari the Light



May 2023

**The Buddha Dharma is the teaching of non-ego. Jodo Shinshu teaches us the Other Power (Amida's working.) Egoistic pursuits should be avoided by all means.**  
— Rennyo (1415-1499) of the Hongwanji



**S**evere winter has ended and warm spring has arrived here in Lethbridge. Flowers start to bloom. Birds chirp. Tiny gophers appear from the ground. This is a natural way no one can stop.

From time to time, we recite the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu at the temple. When we recite Namo Amida Butsu it is an expression of gratitude to Amida Buddha who is constantly concerned about our life and calling to us "I am here. You are never alone. Please take refuge in Amida."

Usually, ministers read quotation before Dharma talks and then recite Namo Amida Butsu three times. The congregation will follow, reciting Namo Amida Butsu three times. Some years ago, a boy about 5 or 6 years old came to me and said, "Sensei, you made a mistake today."

"Did I?" I did not know what he meant.

Then he said, "Sensei, you recited Namo Amida Butsu 7 time today." He was counting! It was so funny. Actually, we can recite it as many times as we like because it is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to Amida Buddha of infinite wisdom and boundless compassion.

There was an elderly woman who always recited the Nembutsu wherever she was, not loud but just mumbling it. Someone noticed it and asked her, "Why are you always reciting Namo Amida Butsu? Are you praying to the Buddha?"

She responded, "Oh no, no. Because Amida Buddha is always calling me. So, I just respond."

It is a natural way, where no ego is involved. She was not showing off how she was a religious lady, how she was a good person. Namo Amida Butsu is just coming out from her lips. By the way, Namo Amida Butsu is not our prayer. Rather Amida Buddha is praying for us day and night, "Please be at peace. I am always with you." So, we do not need to pray.

Rennyo, who was living about 600 years ago, was the 8th descendant of Shinran Shonin. During his life he wrote over 200 letters addressed to his followers. These letters were compiled later and called *Go-bunsho*. Rennyo wanted to share his joy of the Nembutsu with his followers. He encouraged people who were oppressed by those who have power to attend the temple and listen to Buddha's teaching and great wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha. He told people, "Listen to Amida's call and respond to it in the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu. Make Amida Buddha your master in your life, do not make your selfish mind, your ego the master of your life." Many people went to the temple. Buddhist temple is originally called "Vihara" meaning "re-creation" or "the place where people's mind become peaceful without fear." In other words, our temple is the place of non-ego.

Namo Amida Butsu  
Yasuo Izumi, Minister  
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

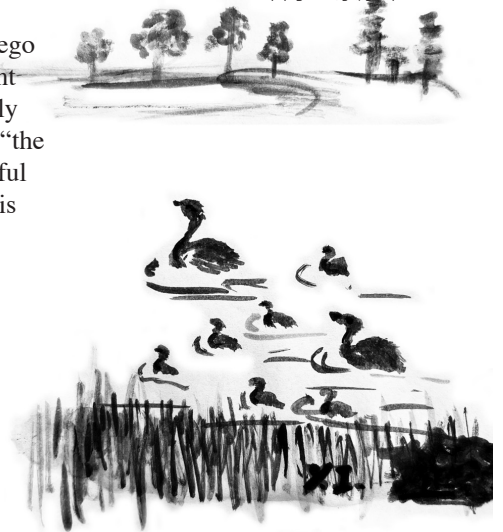
## 「親鸞聖人のご誕生」

好天気のうち「花まつり」が終わり、晴れ晴れとした気候になった、と思った途端、4月の11日と、19、20日に雪が降りました。11日は二時間ほど降った雪が止まりましたが、19日、20日は夜から降った小雪が、翌日20日の昼近くまで降りました。もう春だと思っていましたが、まだまだ気候の変化を感じさせられます。

5月21日は、親鸞聖人のご誕生の日、「藤まつり」であります。

親鸞聖人のご誕生は、1173年で、今から丁度、850年前になりますが、栄華を誇った平家の時代がいよいよ終わりに近づき、源氏に代わろうとする時であり、また、地震、洪水、疫病が次々と起こるといふ不安な時代でもありました。親鸞聖人は、自己を深く見つめられ、ご自分を「愚者」、「凡夫」、「賢者にあらず」と仰いました。人間の、悲しみと、暗さの中に、常に慶びと、明るさを感じながら、88歳まで同信の人々のために、多くのお手紙を書かれ、90歳を一期として、お浄土に帰って往かれたのであります。

合掌 泉康雄



# UPDATE

## from the Board of Directors

I hope this message finds all the Sangha members well. There have been many activities at the temple over the past month. It is officially spring, and we will be planting in our gardens over the next few weeks.

The big event for April was our Hanamatsuri celebration. This was the first full in-person Hanamatsuri service in three years. There were close to 100 people who attended the service and the special meal that followed. Unfortunately, I (Roland) did not order enough food as we underestimated the number of people who would attend. It is great that we are getting closer to the pre-pandemic attendance at the major services, and we will anticipate higher numbers for future services. Thank you to all who help with the setup for the service and meal.

Kynan Ono has organized a couple of very successful youth activities. A planning session with pizza (on March 25th) and a movie night with Ramen noodles (April 1st) were well attended. The youth volunteers did a great job putting this together. There were around 50 people who participated in the movie night. This was a joint venture between the NCS and the temple. Kynan is trying to attract the younger generation to participate in temple and NCS activities. We thank him for all the work he has put into these sessions and look forward to future events. If you know someone between 12-40 who would like to be involved, please pass their contact information to Kynan.

The weekend of April 21st – 23rd was the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (our national organization) AGM held in Steveston. The BTSA was represented in person by me and via Zoom by Kynan Ono (as president), Izumi sensei, and Donna Dubbleboer (as Women’s Federation representative). It was a busy but successful weekend that was well organized by the members of the Steveston temple. Next year the BTSA will be hosting the national general meeting.

For the coming month of May, there is a Karinto-making session booked for May 20th . Please read further on page 5 for more details. We plan to sell the Karinto as a fundraiser at our Bon Odori Festival in July.

Speaking of the Obon festival, we will again host it at the temple in the parking lot as we did last year. We hope to have increased vendors and activities to accommodate the attendees. Practice for the Odori will start on May 15th (Monday evenings, but skip May 22nd, Victoria Day) from 7-8 PM and will continue for eight weeks until July 10th.

All are welcome. A couple of new and fun Odori will be included, so come have fun and learn these dances. Please see the accompanying notice in this issue of the Hikari.

The May Shotsuki service will be held in person and live-streamed on May 7th at 10:30 AM. The link to the online service on our YouTube Channel is:

<https://youtube.com/live/jsP7yNPtHaU?feature=share>

## CHAIR/AV SCHEDULE

### May & June

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

**May 07**  
SHOTSUKI  
Connie Trang  
Kynan Ono, AV

**May 14**  
Maya Ichikawa  
Andrew Ichikawa, AV

**May 21**  
Wayne Tsukishima  
Brenda Ikuta, AV

**May 28**  
Joyce Shigehiro  
Robbie Scharf, AV

**Jun 04**  
SHOTSUKI  
John Dubbleboer  
Andrew Ichikawa, AV

**Jun 11**  
Harry Sugimoto  
Bob Muskovich, AV

**Jun 18**  
BTSA PICNIC

**Jun 25**  
Sheila Oishi  
TBA, AV

Lastly, sad news that Jeff Haines has requested to step away from the board of directors. We want to thank him for his contributions over the past few years. His presence on the board will be missed.

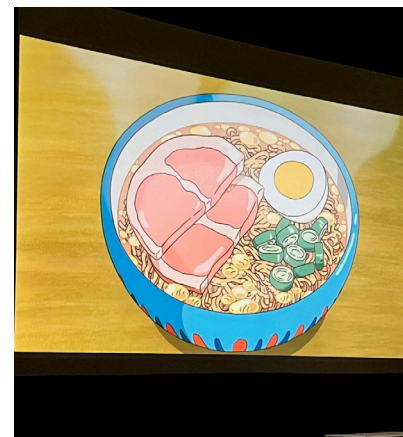
If you have any concerns about events at the temple, don’t hesitate to contact Kynan Ono, one of the board members, or Izumi Sensei or Roland Sensei.

## Movie & Ramen Night Youth Fundraiser



Left, the real thing, and below, screen shots of the movie “Ponyo”.

Opposite page: More images of the evening, including Sheila Oishi’s contribution of delicious mochi treats.





# Birthday of Shinran Shonin (Fujimatsuri)

Shinran Shonin was born in 1173 in Kyoto and died in 1263. During his 90 long years, he taught for those who were incapable of becoming a Buddha by themselves that, "Entrusting Amida's Vow, reciting Namo Amida Butsu, you will be become a Buddha."

Buddha means Awakened One who benefits oneself and benefit others. This means that one who discovers the oneness of life will naturally become a compassionate one. In other words, one who gained wisdom will practices compassion for others.

Shinran Shonin reflected deeply to himself if he, who is full of blind passions, will be able to become such a Buddha.

Upon meeting Honen Shonin, Shinran's long life teacher, he was taught the way of the Nembutsu. After Honen's passing in 1212, Shinran developed his thoughts and taught many followers about "the importance of entrusting Amida's Vow." He wrote a poem: "Since entrusting heart arises from Amida's Vow, /We attain Buddhahood through the Nembutsu by the Vow's spontaneous working..." Thus, he emphasized "Entrusting heart" (Shinjin) as our Buddhahood. It means the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu, will naturally follow an entrusting heart.

Rennyō of the Hongwanji later clarifies Shinran's teaching that "entrusting heart is the cause for birth and recitation is the expression of gratitude."

On the birthday of Shinran Shonin, let's rededicate ourselves to be entrusting of Amida's Vow and recite Namo Amida Butsu in gratitude. Y.I.



photos: Andrew Ichikawa

# DHARMA TALK

**Although it is I who utters and hears “Namo Amida Butsu”, it is the call of Amida, vowing to guide me to the Pure Land.** (われとなえ、われ聞くなれど、なもあみだぶつ連れて行くぞの弥陀の呼び声) — Rev. Shinsui Haraguchi

The poem tells us that the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu is not ours, not our position, but it is Amida’s. Amida Buddha knows who we are. We are essentially self-centered beings. Although we are not able to easily see our own self-centeredness, it is easy for us to see others’ self-centeredness. When we stand before a clear mirror of Amida, we see our own true nature. When everything goes as we like we are happy and satisfied. On the other hand, when things do not go as we like, we complain and get frustrated or even depressed. Sometimes we are happy, sometimes we are unhappy. Are we not like a pendulum? Thus, our mind is constantly changing depending on our circumstances and conditions. Whenever “I” is centered, we will eventually create our own suffering.

Amida of wisdom and compassion thoroughly knows about us, our ignorance. The reason Amida made compassionate Vows is to liberate such beings to the realm of peace and serenity called the Pure Land. The Pure Land is not necessarily just a place we are born after our life has ended but it is here and now, sustaining and supporting our life of uncertainty.

About 30 years ago, I was working at the Toronto Buddhist Church. One day, I was asked to visit a care home in Toronto. It was the first time for me. I was a bit excited. I phoned them and arranged a day and time to visit.

That day, I visited the care home for the first time. One of the staff took me to the room where the dharma talk was to be held. It was a large room. While I was arranging the butsudan/shrine, about 30 elderly Japanese residents of the care home, perhaps over 90 years old bound by wheelchair were brought into the room, one by one by the staff. As I started my introduction, I saw that perhaps half of them were already dozing off. I started to talk on Buddha’s teaching. In the middle of my talk, I realized that most of them were dozing off. “What’s going on” I thought. But I continued my talk. I thought that I should not stop talking. Several staff were standing at the back. Well, I realized, it was not easy to talk to people who are comfortably sleeping.

A woman just in front of me was looking at the floor. I wondered, “Is she also dozing off just sitting in front of me?” Then I started to regret why I was here. It was nothing but a waste of time for me. I raised my voice a little and then said, “I’ll return here a week later. So please remember the short poem I am going to tell you. All right?” No response. I introduced above mentioned poem in Japanese. I repeated the poem a couple of times and then I left. I was so frustrated. My time was fruitless. Why did I say, “I’ll return here next week”? Nobody will remember the poem I read because nobody listened to me. I regret going and complained to myself. My ego, my pride came out.

One week passed quickly. Reluctantly, I returned to the care home. I set up a shrine. I put the flower vase on the left and a candle holder on the right. Between them I placed a burning pot. Then I turned back to the care home residents. I asked them “Do any of you remember the poem I introduced to you last time? Of course, I thought that nobody remembered it because nobody listened to me. My attitude was perhaps arrogant. But surprisingly, the same woman sitting in front me and looking at the floor, slowly raised her hand. “Oh, do you remember it?” I asked. Then she repeated exactly what I had said a week ago. She had been listening to me. Even one person remembered what I had said. Now, I was happy. After my dharma talk was over, I asked one of the staff, “Do you know who she is?” The staff said, “Yes, she is blind but she is a clever woman.” No wonder she was looking down all the time. Now, I became sympathetic to her. Well, she might say, “It is none of your business.” During just those two days, my mind moved up and down, right and left. For myself, Amida is always and constantly moving in my mind and guiding and supporting me to the realm of peace and serenity, Amida’s Pure Land.

Amida Buddha knows who we are. The call of Amida who knows us comes first before we recite it.

In Gassho,  
Yasuo Izumi, Minister



## OBON 2022 SCHEDULE

### Bon Odori Practice

Mondays 6:30-8 pm  
May 15 - July 10

### July 2 (Sunday) Service

11 am @ Brooks Cemetery  
Obon Service @ Heritage Inn

### July 10 (Sunday) Service

10 am @ Magrath Cemetery  
11 am @ Temple Hill Cemetery  
1:30 pm @ Taber Cemetery

### July 15 (Saturday) Bon Odori

7 pm @ Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

### July 16 (Sunday) Service

1 pm @ Mountain View Cemetery  
2:30 @ BTSA for Obon/Monthly Memorial Service  
(July & August)



## REGULAR EVENTS

**NCS Adult Taiko** Tuesdays @ 7pm  
Contact [tanaka.david@gmail.com](mailto:tanaka.david@gmail.com) 403.330.1548

**Study Class** Saturdays @ 10:30am  
Contact [bobmuskovich@gmail.com](mailto:bobmuskovich@gmail.com) or Rev. Izumi

**Meditation** Thursdays @ 7pm  
To register contact Vickie Macarther [spityoga@shaw.ca](mailto:spityoga@shaw.ca)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Condolences

**Teiji Nakamura** (98) passed away April 6, 2023

### Mother's Day Lunch

On Mother's Day, May 14th, the Temple will be serving lunch.  
We hope to see you there!

### Art Project During the Month of May



A table will be set up in the multi-purpose room where members are welcome to decorate terra cotta pots in anticipation of the growing season and celebration of Mother's Day. There will also be small plants and seedlings available to complete the project. All ages welcome!

## KARINTO-MAKING SESSION

Karinto is a traditional Japanese snack. It is a fried dough with a yummy coating giving it a crunchy texture and savory sweetness.

- This is a fundraising project for Bon Odori Festival
- Volunteers can take home a sample of the finished product.

This is the first time temple volunteers will be making karinto since 2019. We will use it as a trial run to determine feasibility for future events. Therefore, for this first event, the volunteer pool we require will be smaller and ensure a balanced combination of experienced and inexperienced volunteers.

- Friday, May 19: dough-making.
- Saturday, May 20: frying the dough and baking a portion of it.
- We will require some volunteers to take home a recipe of noodles to be dried in their home ovens which reduces the baking and waiting time at the temple.
- Goal: 12 batches of dough; 340 small bags.

To Sign Up, click here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A45A9A723A2FE3-karinto>

# BON ODORI PRACTICE

2023 Bon Odori Dance Festival is scheduled for July 15th

Practices begin May 15 through July 10 (8 weeks)

Mondays

6:30 – 7 Learning Activities

7 - 8 pm Dance Practice

\*A full schedule of dances and learning activities will be available at the first session

Meet in the multi-purpose room of the BTSA

Refreshments will be provided each week.

Everyone of all ages are welcome, no experience is required,  
no registration is required



# EVERYBODY WELCOME

# 2023 Membership Form

ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [THEBTSA.COM](http://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 April 3 – **109**

Marjory Tomomitsu  
Tak & Yoko Tsujita

### Hanamatsuri Donations

Anonymous  
Judy Fukushima  
Dorene (Keiko) Gordon  
Andrew Ichikawa & Tahirih Rempel  
Kiyomi Kamitakahara  
Dave & Val Kunimoto  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Gary & Beverly McIlroy  
May Nishikawa  
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura  
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng  
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman  
Heidi Oishi  
Sheila Oishi  
Tak & Jan Okamura  
Doug Osaka  
Roy & Pat Sassa  
Bob & Eiko Shigehiro  
Joe & Mary Shigehiro  
Joyce Shigehiro & Trevor Van Sluys  
Emily Stitt  
Tomiko Sugimoto  
Sachiko Taguchi  
Robert & Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Alan & Margaret Tanaka  
David & Linda Tanaka  
Eichi & Betty Tanaka  
Glen & Pamela Tanaka  
Clifford Thomas  
Noel & Karen Thomas  
Jim, Marion or Shannon Tomiyama  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama

### Shotsuki Donations

April 2023  
Nadine Hamabata  
Neil Hinatsu  
Lois Hinz  
Lily Kaga  
Eleanor Katakami  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng  
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman  
Sheila Oishi  
Doug Osaka  
Evelyn Osaka  
Larry Osaka  
Roy & Pat Sassa  
Emily Stitt  
Harry Sugimoto  
Tomiko Sugimoto  
Robert & Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Alan & Margaret Tanaka  
Glen & Pamela Tanaka  
Clifford Thomas  
George Tokuda  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama  
Lori Yokoyama

### Other Donations

March 2023  
Anonymous  
CanadaHelps.org  
Rev Yasuo & Sachi Izumi  
Masaye Tanaka

### Funeral Donations

March 2023  
Don Chandler  
Judy Fukushima  
Lily Kaga  
Etsuko Karaki  
Nitta Kayo  
Rosemary Kitagawa  
Ken Kurio  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Ken & Vickie Nakagama  
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura  
Mitsuko Oga  
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng  
Setsuko Ohno  
Heidi Oishi  
Chiyeko (Chec) Robinson  
Irene Sakamoto  
Shig Sakamoto  
Roy & Pat Sassa  
Sumio & Shirley Setoguchi  
Emily Stitt  
Karen Taguchi  
Sachiko Taguchi  
Robert & Judy Takaguchi  
Betty Taniguchi  
Cathy Taniguchi  
June Terakita  
Bill Teshima  
Clifford Thomas  
George Tokuda  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama  
Tak & Yoko Tsujita  
Ken & Hiroko Yoshihara

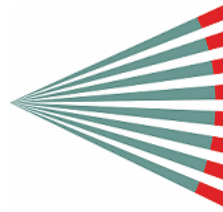
# HANAMATSURI At the Temple April 2nd



photos: Andrew Ichikawa, Maya Ichikawa

Please inform us if your name has been omitted, misspelled, or if you wish for your name not to be published. Thank you.





nikkei memory  
capture project

# BTSA-Nikkei Memory Capture Project Butsudan Initiative collaboration **UPDATE**

Invite from Dr. Darren J. Aoki

## Returning the Stories Celebration

Saturday 13 May 2013

1:30-3:00 pm (doors open at 1:00)

Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden – Bunka Centre  
9th Ave South & Mayor Magrath Drive

### RSVP

Please would you respond by  
**Monday 8 May**, letting me know:  
*whether you are attending and names of attendees*  
[darren.j.aoki@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:darren.j.aoki@plymouth.ac.uk)

**Refreshments to be served.**



## Event Description

To incite memories. To record our heritage. To preserve its legacy. These are the three guiding principles of the Nikkei Memory Capture Project and its aim to explore the histories of southern Alberta's Japanese Canadians. There is a fourth principle: to return the stories that have been so generously shared with us and ensure that our past lives into the future.

On 13 May, at the Nikka Yuko Bunka Centre, the Nikkei Memory Capture Project invites you to join us in this Celebration of stories that narrate a central story of southern Alberta's history.

It includes the launch of a major new installation exhibit that in over 110 episodes provides the first comprehensive public history guide to southern Alberta's Japanese Canadian twentieth century: The NMCP Histories of Distinction Audio Guide.

The Celebration will include the debut screening of new co-created digital storytelling films that advance our explorations of inter-racial intimacy, intergenerational sharing, spirituality, and difficult histories. And, we'll unveil an important new history resource – the Nikkei Memory Capture Project's web hub.

At the heart of this Celebration is gratitude to and acknowledgement of the individuals who have invited us into their lives to share their past and the organisations which have collaborated with us in an array of exciting initiatives.

The Nikkei Memory Capture Project is a community oral history project started in 2017 that has engaged with over 100 individuals and that brings together the University of Lethbridge and the University of Plymouth (UK), in long-term partnership with key organisations: the Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area and the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden. This Celebration is possible thanks to the generous support of the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Insight Grant, and the Arts & Humanities Research Council UK Impact Acceleration Account.



MAY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY						
	6:30pm Minyo Dance 1	7pm Taiko 2	3	7pm Meditation 4	5	10:30am Study Class* 6
10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service (live stream) 7	6:30pm Minyo Dance 8	7pm Taiko 9	10	7pm Meditation 11	12	10:30am Study Class* 13
10:30am Regular Service* 14	6:30pm Odori Practice 15	7pm Taiko 16	17	7pm Meditation 18	Karinto dough prep 19	10:30am Study Class* Karinto-Making 20
10:30am Ghotan-e (Shinran's Birthday)* 21	No Practice 22	7pm Taiko 23	24	7pm Meditation 25	26	10:30am Study Class* 27
10:30am Regular Service* 28	6:30pm Odori Practice 29	7pm Taiko 30	31	<b>Minister Schedule</b> - Rev. Izumi will be at temple on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday - Rev. Dr. Roland Ikuta will be at temple on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday		

JUNE: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
						10:30am Study Class* 3
10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service (live stream) 4	6:30pm Odori Practice 5	7pm Taiko 6	7	7pm Meditation 8	9	10:30am Study Class* 10
10:30am Regular Service* 11	6:30pm Odori Practice 12	7pm Taiko 13	14	7pm Meditation 15	16	10:30am Study Class* 17
10:30am BTSa Picnic* 18	6:30pm Odori Practice 19	7pm Taiko 20	21	7pm Meditation 22	23	10:30am Study Class* 24
10:30am Regular Service* 25	6:30pm Odori Practice 26	7pm Taiko 27	28	7pm Meditation 29	30	