

# Hikari the Light



May 2024

This is a modified version of the Dharma message given on March 10, 2024.

## **“Reflections of a foolish baldheaded one”**

*On the inside, I have doubtful feelings.*

*On the outside, I appear to have a religious understanding.*

*On the inside, I have an evil nature.*

*On the outside, I appear to be good.*

*On the inside I am deceitful.*

*On the outside, I appear to be sincere.*

*On the inside, I am foolish.*

*On the outside, I appear to be wise.*

The above reading comes from the writings of Shinran Shonin who is the founder of our school of Buddhism. In Judo Shinshu teachings, self-reflection is a very important part of our spiritual development. This is one of the innovations and focuses that is different about our sect of Buddhism. In the passage above, Master Shinran contrasts what he is like on the inside compared to his outward appearance. While he might look like someone with deep religious understanding and good nature, sincere and wise, he feels that inwardly he has doubts, he is evil, and he is deceitful and foolish. How many of us would admit to these negative qualities?

It is extremely difficult for us to reflect on ourselves and truly understand our inner nature. This was brought to my attention recently. As I have been conducting services, I have had at least four people tell me that I look just like my father when I am chanting up on the Naijin. When I hear this comment it makes me hesitate. How would you react if someone told you you look just like your father or mother? Most of us would have a negative reaction. I think of my father as someone much shorter than me and much older. I think of him as someone whose hair was thinning and who had a slouched posture. I could not help but think that I was nothing like what my father used to be. Most people who've made this comment are doing so in a complementary way. They were simply making an observation and had a good perception of who my father was. I, however, could only think of the comments as being negative. When I think of my father, I probably am much like the way he was when he was in his mid-60s. While I have trouble accepting it, I must face the fact that I am in late middle age. My hair is thinning, I am overweight, and I can have a bit of a stooped posture. How hard it is for us to see ourselves truly the way we are, even in a physical sense. How much harder is it for us to see ourselves in a spiritual sense? Our ego makes us think of ourselves as young and vibrant and very good-looking and not the way we truly are. This may be partly a defence mechanism or denial, so we don't have to constantly worry that we are getting old. It is difficult to see faults in ourselves. When we make a mistake, our immediate reaction is to blame others for what went wrong. It was his fault, or their

fault, or the fault or ineptness of others. It couldn't be me. I am never wrong, and I will never make mistakes.

In Shinran Shonin's teachings, he often reflects on himself as a spiritual being. Through the light of the Dharma, he sees his ego self, beyond the clever defence mechanisms that we all employ. He recognizes that he has doubts, that he is evil and that he can be deceitful and foolish. Shinran, in his writing, shows how his true self, his enlightened self, illuminates his heart and mind and shows him his ego self, just as he is. The Shin Buddhist path is one of seeing oneself as we truly are. Why was this self-reflection so important to Shinran Shonin? He was struggling to try to be a good monk and practiced to attain enlightenment. He realized after 20 years of practice that he was not getting anywhere. That he could not attain enlightenment due to his ego. It is this self-reflection and realization that led him to leave Mount Hiei and seek another path. It is this realization that leads him to Honen and to accept the Nembutsu and Pure Land teachings. Once he realized his limitations, he was made aware of the compassionate Vow of Amida Buddha and that birth in the Pure Land could be achieved only through their compassion and not by his efforts. Shinran realized that the Buddha accepts us just the way we are. Even with our faults and limitations, we are accepted into the Pure Land by Amida Buddha.



Dr. Roland Ikuta, Minister



Temple member, Alan Tanaka, shared a photo he took during Roland Sensei's "Introduction to Buddhism". This was a six-week course covering general Buddhism and then more specifically Jodo Shinshu Buddhism (Pure Land school). Alan commented that the classes were great and widely received as many joined online as an option.

# UPDATE from the Board of Directors

Greetings from the Board! We hope you are well and enjoying the spring weather. Roland Sensei will be away from May 16 to 21, 2024. Kynan Ono will conduct the Sunday Service on May 19, 2024.

A new family event, Kodomo no hi, will be held at the Temple on Saturday, May 4th, 2024 from 1:00 to 6:00 PM and will feature a variety of fun and cultural events including Karate, taiko, Minyo Dancers, sing-along, and storytelling.

BTSA Casino will take place on May 14 and 15, 2024. Thank you to all the volunteers.

21 BTSA members have successfully completed their Safe Food Handling certification. Congratulations and thank you for keeping our food preparation and service safe for guests and members of the Temple. Of note, our next Chow Mein Supper is scheduled for October 20, 2024.

Upcoming events include: Our second Vietnamese Cooking Class with Patricia Luu, who donates all the ingredients in support of the Temple; and our inaugural Vesak Festival will take place on Friday, June 14th and Saturday, June 15th, 2024, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Buddhist Community (please note the article on this page).

The May Shotsuki Memorial is Sunday, May 5 at 10:30 am. For livestream, the YouTube link is below. You can also access it at [thebtsa.com](https://www.thebtsa.com) site.  
<https://youtube.com/live/pRCtbCqyVSE?feature=share>

**BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA**  
470-40 St S, Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5  
403.327.1260 [btsaboard@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:revroland@shaw.ca)  
Cell 403.360.8400  
Home 403.317.0078

[www.thebtsa.com](http://www.thebtsa.com)

note: Rev. Ikuta is unavailable May 16-21



The BTSA AGM occurred on April 21st this year.

photo: Alan Tanaka

## VESAK DAY with the Sri Lanka Buddhist Community

We have a very exciting new venture to announce. The BTSA will be holding Vesak (Wesak) Day celebrations with the Sri Lanka Buddhist Community of Lethbridge. Vesak Day is observed by many schools of Buddhism as a joint celebration of the birth, death and enlightenment of the historical Buddha. It is typically held in late May. In many larger communities, it is an opportunity for Buddhists of different ethnic backgrounds to join together to celebrate our common spiritual path. This year we will be holding this celebration on June 14th and 15th.

On June 14th there will be an exhibition of lanterns decorated by families from the Sri Lanka community. The display of the lanterns will be in the multipurpose room from 7 – 9 PM. Saturday's activities will focus on a joint service with the Sri Lanka congregation. It will start at 10 AM with a short Jodo Shinshu service followed by joint sutra chanting. There will be a lunch provided by the Sri Lanka group at 11 AM. Following the lunch, there will be a series of dharma talks given by the Sri Lanka monks who will be visiting from Calgary. If you have any questions about this event or are willing to help with running the event please contact Roland Sensei.

**PLEASE JOIN US IN THE MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM AFTER SERVICE ON MAY 12TH FOR A LIGHT MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH PROVIDED BY TOBAN 4.**

## CHAIR/AV SCHEDULE May & June 2024

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

**May 05**

SHOTSUKI  
Connie Ono  
Kynan Ono, AV

**May 12**

Maya Ichikawa  
Andrew Ichikawa, AV

**May 19**

Wayne Tsukishima  
Brenda Ikuta, AV

**May 26**

Joyce Shigehiro  
AV TBD

**Jun 02**

SHOTSUKI  
John Dubbelboer  
Andrew Ichikawa, AV

**Jun 09**

Harry Sugimoto  
Bob Muskovich, AV

**Jun 16**

Andrew Ichikawa  
Brenda Ikuta, AV

**Jun 23**

Sheila Oishi  
Kynan Ono, AV

**Jun 30**

PICNIC @ Pavan Park  
Kynan Ono

# BON ODORI PRACTICE

## THE 2024 BON ODORI DANCE FESTIVAL IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 20TH!

- EVERY MONDAY MAY 27 - JULY 15 (8 SESSIONS)
- IN THE BTSA MULTIPURPOSE ROOM:
- 6:30 – 7:00 P.M. LEARNING ACTIVITIES
- 7:00 - 8:00 P.M. DANCE PRACTICE

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

EVERYONE OF ALL AGES IS WELCOME: NO EXPERIENCE IS REQUIRED. NO REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.



# EVERYBODY WELCOME

## REGULAR EVENTS

### Minyo Dance

Contact Brenda Ikuta for most recent schedule  
[brenda.ikuta63@gmail.com](mailto:brenda.ikuta63@gmail.com) 403.317.0078

### Meditation Wednesdays @ 9:30am

in-person and online

To register contact Vickie MacArthur [spiryoga@shaw.ca](mailto:spiryoga@shaw.ca)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Rev. Ikuta is conducting sessions on rituals and chanting** every Tuesday afternoons from 3:30 to 5 PM. It is a relaxed way to learn how to perform them. If anybody is interested in joining or would like more information please contact Roland Sensei.

### NCS IKIGOMI: Intergenerational Language Exchange Café

**Date: June 16, 12 pm**

Join us for a unique cultural experience at our Language Exchange Café. This event offers a wonderful opportunity to communicate across generations with a blend of Japanese, Japanese Canadian slang, and English. We welcome participants of all ages to this cultural and community-building event. A light lunch will be provided with tea and coffee. Stay tuned for more information and details. Don't miss out on this experience of language, culture, and community!

Please speak to any members of the NCS Ikigomi if you have suggestions and email us at [ikigomincs@gmail.com](mailto:ikigomincs@gmail.com).

Thank you to the BTSA for their collaboration.

**The annual BTSA picnic is scheduled for June 30th** at the John Martin recreational area (Pavan Park). The service will begin at 10:30 am, and entrance gate will be open at 9 am. As in previous years, this will be a potluck meal, and KFC, rice and tea will be provided. We encourage members to pack their own dishes to decrease waste.

**JSBTC -WF Update** We are trying to create a list of women in our Temple who support the JSBTC WF. So far we have 15 names. If you would like your name included, or have questions please contact:

Donna Dubbelboer, 403-381-7643 [jdubbelboer@shaw.ca](mailto:jdubbelboer@shaw.ca)

## Fundraiser for Bon Odori Festival

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

**Friday, May 10:** DOUGH-MAKING

**Saturday, May 11:** CUTTING, FRYING AND BAKING THE DOUGH

GOAL: 12 batches of dough (240 bags).

Volunteers can take home a small sample of the finished product.

**If you would like to volunteer please sign up at this link:**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A45A9A723A2FE3-49239747-karinto>

# HAPPY HANAMATSURI!



# Dharma Message

KYNAN ONO



Kynan Ono led sutra chanting during the March 24th service and provided the dharma message below.

***There is no separation between self and other, and my life exists only because of others. It is the power of others, the power beyond myself, that sustains my entire existence.***

– Shinran Shonin

This quote is a theme in Buddhism that I always come back to. To me, it is what I call the indisputable fact and reality of life.

When Ikuta Sensei and I were planning my first service, he asked me, “What sutra would you like to do?” And of course, I said *Junirai*, because this is the sutra I grew up chanting every Sunday at the Honpa. Some say the Honpa was an extension of the Raymond Church, where *Junirai* was also the common sutra. This made me think about the fact that my choice of sutra today was not just because I chose it, but it was by the power of others that I chose it. The interactions, causes and conditions of those from Raymond nearly a hundred years ago affected my choices today for Sutra.

Izumi Sensei once said that all things have worked for us to be born. And I agree with this. The reality of life is that we live it through the causes and conditions that surround us each day. I am here because my Bachan and Jichan met, and fell in love. If Grandpa had not tried to sneak a closer look at the freshly baked pie Bachan had placed on the window to cool before getting caught, I might not be here today to speak to everyone here.

My life has been filled with the joy of getting to know many in this Temple and many who have been a part of my life. And yet I must say the nembutsu in gratitude, put my hands together in Gassho, as Buddhism lights the way into fully realizing the depth of the well of compassion I have experienced.

I give thanks to the causes and conditions that brought up the existence of each person I have met and each person here in this Temple. For if it had happened any other way, we would

not have the joy it has been to know one another. That is why it is to me the reality of life. I cannot deny the profound effect all have had upon me, and I cannot deny that there are things that I have not seen that have been done by others that have made the conditions of my life.

This includes even what some would call negative causes and conditions. This is one of the key things that helps me get through life and understand myself as a Buddhist. It is also why it helps me deal with the idea of regret. I must give thanks for every single thing that has happened to me. Even if it is truly hard to accept, because sometimes the joys I have experienced in life are the reactions to those bad causes.

This is a short interaction from the Tannisho between Shinran and Yuien-bo:

Shinran asks his disciple Yuien-bo, on the basis of his trust in Shinran’s teachings, to kill 1000 people to attain birth in the Pure Land. Yuien-bo refuses, saying that it isn’t within his power to kill even one person. Shinran then explains that this shows that people commit actions based on the fruition of karma, rather than any inherent good or evil in their hearts.

The fruition of all the causes and conditions, by ourselves and others that create our lives. The never-ending Golden Chain that interconnects us all, in ways which we could never imagine or see.

It is not that we also should do good things just for the sake of good karma. Shinran also taught that not every good action will have a good reaction. However, we should still endeavour to be good in this life.

I am Buddhist, and I am a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. I believe in the workings of Shinran Shonin, his words and his teachings. I know that who I am today, is not because of me, but because Shakyamuni Buddha achieved enlightenment so long ago, because Shinran Shonin listened to his teaching, and I learned theirs from my teachers today.

Once I was sitting right there with my Bachan, Toshiko Tanaka. It was a regular Sunday service, and a minister was visiting from out of town. I remember him coming up to her and they both started talking. And the Sensei started thanking Bachan over and over again. There was something that my Bachan used to say often. A Japanese word that I believe brings together the entire idea of interconnection.

It is a word that I think truly illuminates the meaning that we are subject to the power of others.

It is *Okagesamade*.

In English, its literal translation is I give thanks to your shadow. But there is a deeper meaning behind it. When Sensei was thanking her, she kept saying to him *Okagesamede*, *Okagesamde* as she bowed her head.

She was saying I give thanks to all that is unseen that you have done. I give gratitude for it and all that it has done to create the causes and conditions of my life.

And so to all in this Sangha, be seen here today or unseen, I say to you *Okagesamade*.

# 2024 Membership Form

ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [THEB.TSA.COM](http://THEB.TSA.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!

2024 Membership  
to April 19 – 111

### Hanamatsuri

Anonymous Cash Donation  
Eiko Aoki  
B.TSA Member  
John & Donna Dubbelboer  
Judy Fukushima  
Dorene (Keiko) Gordon  
Shinako (Sheila) Higa  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Andrew Ichikawa & Tahirih Rempel  
Lily Kaga  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Gary & Beverly McIlroy  
Jim Nakagawa  
May Nishikawa  
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura  
Mitsuko Oga  
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng  
Setsuko Ohno  
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman  
Heidi Oishi  
Sheila Oishi  
Jan Okamura  
Doug Osaka  
Larry Osaka  
Darcee Richardson  
Roy & Pat Sassa  
Sachi Scharf  
Joe & Mary Shigehiro  
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro  
Emily Stitt  
Tomiko Sugimoto

Sachiko Taguchi  
Kazuko Takaguchi  
Robert & Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Eichi & Betty Tanaka  
Glen & Pamela Tanaka  
Masaye Tanaka  
June Terakita  
Clifford Thomas  
Noel & Karen Thomas  
George Tokuda  
Jim, Marion & Shannon Tomiyama  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama  
Marjory Tomomitsu  
Tak & Yoko Tsujita  
Wayne & Amy Tsukishima

### Shotsuki Donations

March/April 2024

Anonymous  
Michelle Demers  
Mitsuyo Fujimoto  
Hanako Nadine Hamabata  
Helen Hikita  
Neil Hinatsu  
Lois Hintz  
Maya Ichikawa  
Lily Kaga  
Kiyomi Kamitakahara  
Dave & Val Kunimoto  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Joyce Miyashita  
Shig & Katie Nakagawa  
Mitsuko Oga  
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Glen & Pamela Tanaka  
Masaye Tanaka  
Cliffor Thomas  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama  
Anh & Ich Trang  
Barry Yokoyama  
Ken & Hiroko Yoshihara

### Other Donations

April 2024

Anonymous Cash Donors  
Rena Barlow  
B.TSA Member  
CanadaHelps.Org  
Masaye Tanaka  
Tyler Wagenaar



### Funeral Donations

Marry Hass  
Victoria Haz  
Molly Hollihan  
Irene Karia  
Rosemary Kitagawa  
Shirley Mertz  
Karen Mitzushima  
Sut & Neva Oishi  
Kelly Okamura

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.



### COOKING IN MAY!

Patricia Luu will be offering her time and expertise once again, running a cooking class on May 16th. Please keep an eye out for the time and sign-up link that will be emailed to the membership.

## Soup Kitchen April 23



Back: John Dubbelboer, David Major, Joe Shigehiro, Don Friesen.  
Front: Deb Friesen, Margaret Tanaka, Dorene Gordon, Emily Stitt, Mary Shigehiro, Donna Dubbelboer, Amman and Chris (seated)  
Photos: Alan Tanaka

# Kodomo No Hi

## Children's Day Festival

### こどもの日

Saturday, May 4th, 2024 | 1pm - 6pm  
At the BTSA

Organized by the BTSA, in collaboration with Ikigomi NCS, NCS Minyo Dancers, and Taka Karate School

#### Activities include:

- Onigiri Gohan Making
- Karate
- Taiko
- Sing-Along
- Storytelling
- Minyo Dancing
- Koi No Bori Making
- Origami
- Scavenger Hunt
- Curry Dinner at 5pm

To register, please email [kynan.ono95@gmail.com](mailto:kynan.ono95@gmail.com) for the SignUpGenius link



If you are interested in volunteering at the Soup Kitchen with the temple please contact Emily Stitt: [emistitt@hotmail.com](mailto:emistitt@hotmail.com)

403-380-6683

Friday, May 24, 10 - 1:30

Friday, July 5, 10 - 1:30

Sunday, August 18, 9 - 12





MAY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			9:30am Meditation			1pm Kodomo mo hi Children's Festival
			1	2	3	4
10:30 am Shotsuki Memorial Service/Gotane - Shinran's Birthday			9:30am Meditation		Karinto-making	Karinto-making
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10:30 am Regular Service Mother's Day Lunch		Casino shifts	9:30am Meditation	Cooking Class		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10:30 am Regular Service			9:30am Meditation		10am Soup Kitchen	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:30 am Regular Service	6:30pm Bon Odori Practice		9:30am Meditation			
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JUNE: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	6:30pm Bon Odori Practice		9:30am Meditation Toban Cooking Classes			1 / Mein-making
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10:30 am Shotsuki Memorial	6:30pm Bon Odori Practice		9:30am Meditation 12pm Intergen- erational Language Exchange Café		7pm Vesak Festival Lantern Display	10am Vesak Day Service & meal
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
10:30 am Regular Service	6:30pm Bon Odori Practice		9:30am Meditation			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
10:30 am Regular Service Temple Clean-Up	6:30pm Bon Odori Practice		9:30am Meditation			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
10:30 am Annual BTSa Picnic						
30						