

# Hikari the Light

November 2021



“Understanding fully the principle of causality, we shall not practice petitionary prayer.”

*Essentials of the Jodo Shinshu*

**Every early morning**, I take our dog, Taro, for a walk. While I am walking, I meet, from time to time, an elderly Caucasian couple. One morning, they asked me “What are you doing for living?” I said, “I am a Buddhist minister.” They said, “Oh, you are a minister, so you must pray a lot every day.” I said, “Not really.” They left me looking puzzled. Many people think that all ministers pray a lot. It is not necessarily so. At least, I do not pray. I do not need to pray because a compassionate Amida is always embracing me no matter what happens.

My wife and I have three daughters. One of daughter’s husband is a faithful Christian. One day, our daughter told me, “You know dad, my husband always prays for your health before he goes to bed.” “Oh, really!? Please tell him my big thanks,” said I. I sincerely appreciated him. A prayer for others is beautiful.

Buddhists, Jodo Shinshu Buddhists in particular, do not pray much. A Buddhist scholar once said: Jodo Shinshu is a religion of no prayer. Well, not really. For example, in his letter, Shinran Shonin says, “I hope that everyone will, deeply entrusting themselves to the nembutsu and firmly embracing prayers for the peace of the world in their hearts, together say the nembutsu.” And he continues: “May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha’s teaching spread!”

I think there are many kinds of prayers. A prayer of supplication, a prayer of petition, a prayer of forgiveness and so on. When I was young, I happened to see

a painting by Jean Millet entitled “Angelus” which was translated in Japanese “Bansho” meaning “The Bell in the Evening.” Peasant farmers, husband and wife, are standing on the farm and bowing quietly, listening to a church bell. I think this is a prayer of thanksgiving. A prayer for thanksgiving does not involve any selfish desires. So, it is sacred and beautiful. I think in the Buddhist word it is “gassho” which we always do.

Jodo Shinshu says a prayer is okay but not for petitionary purposes, meaning a prayer asking for or requesting something of God or Buddha. A well-known Christian novelist, Shusaku Endo once wrote: “Suppose, you have a son who was diagnosed a cancer. You will pray for God or Buddha every day saying, ‘Please cure my son. Please save him.’ But in spite of all prayers, his son died. Perhaps, you will cry out: ‘There is no God! There is no Buddha!’” “True religion,” Endo says, “begins from here. There is no God or Buddha who fulfills our desires.”

Well, at least the Buddha or more specifically Amida Buddha is the one who always embraces us and supports us whether we are happy or sad because the nature of Amida Buddha is the one who grasps and never abandons us with unconditional compassion. When we really appreciate Amida we usually do not pray but say the nembutsu, *namo amida butsu* in gratitude.

In our life, no one is able to avoid hardships and difficulties, time of despair or time to cry. Jodo Shinshu followers put their hands together and recite *namo amida butsu* for gratitude because for such weak human beings, Amida made great Vow to liberate them and gave us peace of mind. Yes, **Amida Buddha of compassion is always and constantly praying for us, calling, “Because of your imperfection, full of selfish desires, I am here with you.”**

In *gassho*,

Yasuo Izumi, Minister  
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

「冬来たる」

ある朝、起きて外を見ると、庭は一面、霜で覆われていました。ああ、これからのよいよ冬になるなあ、アルバータの零下20度、時には30度まで下がる厳しい冬になるなあ、と思いました。トイレに行くとき、そこに二匹のハエが寄り添うように亡くなっていました。親と子か、夫婦のハエかと、一瞬、寂しさをさそいます。「冬のハエ、二匹ならんで、死んでいる」と思っているところへ「お前も死ぬぞ」とハエが教えてくれました。

「お前も死ぬぞ」は誰にとっても現実の声でしょう。忘れていても「死への恐れ、不安」は私たちにはどうすることも出来ない大問題。そこに、仏様の声が届いているのです。「お願いだから仏の呼び声、ナモアミダブツを聞いておくれ」と。「私」とあらゆる生きものに向かって、今、呼んでいて下さるのです。「決して、お前の命を空しく終わらせないよ。広く、明るい仏の世界に生まれさせるぞ!」と、仏様の願いが「ナモアミダブツ」と働いているのです。そうでありました。つい、忘れておりました、と感謝のお念仏が出てくださいます。さあ、厳しい冬を、また、大地に足をつけ、仏様と一緒に強く生かして頂きましょう。

合掌 泉康雄



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# UPDATE

## from the Board of Directors

The board of directors have decided that due to increasing COVID numbers we will have a very careful re-opening plan. The plan for October to December is to have live-streamed services on YouTube with limited in-person attendance (10 people). They will be held on the first Sunday of the month for Shotsuki memorial services. Please go to our YouTube Channel to view the service or click on the link below or click on the banner on our web page [thebtsa.com](http://thebtsa.com). Please copy the link below and enter it to your browser. <https://youtu.be/yoWxVZwig0>

If you would like to attend in person please register by contacting Roland at [rolikuta@shaw.ca](mailto:rolikuta@shaw.ca). You can also register for the service by going to the sign-up Genius form:

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

Although the activities at the temple will be limited, the re-instituted Toban system for temple activities will continue until the end of the year. This is on a trial basis and a way of re-connecting with our volunteers. Toban 4 is assigned to November and Toban 2 will look after December. The primary duty will be to look after the set-up for the Shotsuki services. If a funeral arises, duties will be determined by the pandemic restrictions at that time. The Toban coordinators will be contacting volunteers to see if they are able to help and to enquire about their on-going involvement.

Finally this is to notify the members that Roland and Brenda are away in Victoria for the months of October until the end of December. They can still be reached via their email accounts. If there are more urgent issues please contact Izumi sensei, Kynan Gordon [kynan.gordon95@gmail.com](mailto:kynan.gordon95@gmail.com) or Andrew Ichikawa [adichikawa@yahoo.com](mailto:adichikawa@yahoo.com) during their absence.

## Buddha in the Autumn Garden

BTSA's garden Buddha (left photo taken Oct. 21/21) is surrounded by dying but still green foliage in late October, preparatory to the sure-to-come winter. Compare it with the photo on the right (taken Aug. 18/21) when apples were ready for harvesting. The weather change leaves the stone Sakyamuni unchanged, embodying the serenity of Jodo Shinshu. The temple, which has undergone severe setbacks since the pandemic that began in early 2020, has limited itself to a maximum of 10 attendants at its monthly shotsuki services for November and December, keeping with Alberta government restrictions. Looking forward to a time the temple can resume its regular operations and weekly service schedule.



## REGULAR EVENTS

**Minyo Dance** Mondays, 6:30 pm

last practice of the year December 6th and resuming January 10th  
Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 or [sas7@telus.net](mailto:sas7@telus.net)

**Tonari Gumi** Currently ON HOLD due to COVID restrictions

Contact Heidi Oishi 403.330.6461 or [heidi.oishi@gmail.com](mailto:heidi.oishi@gmail.com)

## Exploring Buddhism

Saturdays, 10:30am - 12 noon.

Contact [bobmuskovich@gmail.com](mailto:bobmuskovich@gmail.com)

Interested in learning about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism? The sessions are an open and free discussion in a relaxed atmosphere. Whether you are new to Buddhism or a longtime practitioner, you are welcome to join us in person, for our weekly discussions at the Temple Boardroom. This is open to the public and free of charge.

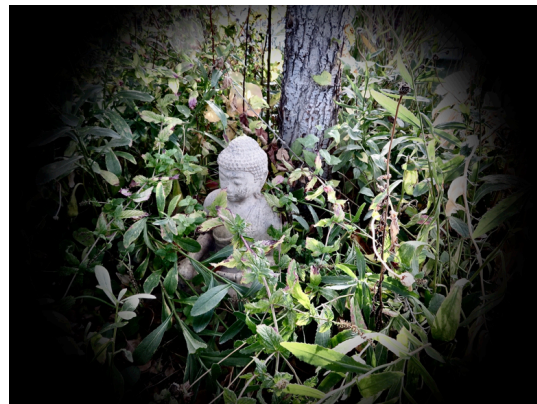
## PROGRAMS

**Meditation and Yoga classes** are currently ON HOLD due to COVID restrictions

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Condolences

**Toshihiko Iwamoto** (97) passed away on October 4, 2021





JSBTC



JODO SHINSHU BUDDHIST TEMPLES OF CANADA

# JSBTC Japan Tour 2023

Shinran Shonin 850th Birth Anniversary  
Jodoshinshu 800th Foundation Anniversary Kyosan Hoyo  
&  
17th World Buddhist Women's Convention

## Year of 2023

- May 07 Leave Canada for Japan
- May 08 Arrive in Japan, free at leisure
- May 09 Full day Kyoto and Otsu tour (TBD)
- May 10 Celebration memorial service  
at Nishi Hongwanji Temple
- May 11 WBW Convention at Kyoto ICC
- May 12 WBW Convention at Kyoto ICC

*"Life of Nembutsu enables  
us to appreciate every  
encounter"*



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INTERNATIONAL**

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Hikari the Light

# BTSA Moments to Recall

Following are a few photographs from a BTSA event 10 years ago as part of an occasional Hikari feature.

## Dana Bake Sale - Nov. 26, 2011



Waiting for the doors to open



Crowd entering temple lobby



Buyers making their selections

# 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 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  
at October 20 – 148

### Obon Donations 2021

Akiko Oshiro

### Shotsuki Hoyo Donations

October 2021

Judy Fukushima  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Yutaka Matsuno and Chiyomi Matsuno  
Ken Ohno and Nancy Eng  
Setsuko Ohno  
Heidi Oishi  
Roy and Pat Sassa  
Bob and Eiko Shigehiro  
Joe and Mary Shigehiro  
Tom and Mitsuko Shigehiro  
Tomiko Shono  
Emily Stitt  
Tomiko Sugimoto  
Robert and Judy Takaguchi  
Joe and Sumi Tomiyama  
Tak and Yoko Tsujita

**Total - \$1,020**

### Other Donations

October 2021

Kai Choju  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Akira Ichikawa  
Tosh Iwamoto  
Rev. Yasuo and Sachi Izumi  
Yose Oikawa

**Total - \$6,120**

### Funeral Donations

October 2021

Eietsu Chiba  
George and Elaine Dowler  
Lois Hattori  
Roslynn and Don Heggie  
Akira Ichikawa  
Kay and Rosemary Kitagawa  
Steve and Brenda Markus  
Cheryl Matsugi  
Jim and Joan Nakagawa

Sway and Toshiko Nishimura  
Karen Nishiyama and Ron Wenger  
Reyko Nishiyama  
Mitsuko Oga  
Jean Oishi  
Tak and Jan Okamura  
Chiyeko (Chec)Robinson  
Kenneth and Keiko Sampson  
Roy and Pat Sassa  
Bob and Eiko Shigehiro  
Joe and Mary Shigehiro  
Tomiko Shono  
Harry Sugimoto  
Tomiko Sugimoto  
Noris and Sachiko Taguchi  
Robert and Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Bill and June Terakita  
Joe and Sumiko Tomiyama  
Wesbridge Construction Ltd.

**Total - \$1,600**

**Total October 2021 - \$8,790.00**

## FOR CHILDREN

### Mr. Alarm Clock and Mr. Mouse

There once was an alarm clock sitting on a bookshelf. One day there was a little earthquake. So, the alarm clock fell behind the bookshelf. The alarm clock cried out, "Ouch!" But the alarm clock continued to work faithfully. Mr. Mouse heard a big cry outside. So, he came out from a little hole in the wall. Mr. Mouse found Mr. Alarm Clock lying on the carpet behind the bookshelf. So, Mr. Mouse called out, "Hello, Mr. Alarm Clock! Are you all right?"

Mr. Alarm Clock answered, "Yes, I am all right. Thank you."

Mr. Mouse asked, "Mr. Alarm Clock, why are you working so hard? Nobody is watching you."

"Well," said Mr. Alarm Clock, looking at Mr. Mouse. "This is my job to work. I work day and night."

Mr. Mouse said, "But, nobody is watching you. Why don't you take a rest?"

"You know, Mr. Mouse, I think it is only a thief who works only while nobody is watching." Hearing this, Mr. Mouse sneaked away through the little hole in the wall. (Y. Izumi)

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.



NOVEMBER: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY Services require registration	6:30pm Minyo	1pm Tonari Gumi ON HOLD until further notice	9:15am Beg. Yoga 10:45am Res. Yoga 1pm Meditation ON HOLD until further notice			10:30am Explore Buddhism*
	1	2	3	4	5	6
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service* via YouTube, limited in-person	6:30pm Minyo					10:30am Explore Buddhism*
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	6:30pm Minyo					10:30am Explore Buddhism* BC JSBT Zoom
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	6:30pm Minyo					10:30am Explore Buddhism*
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	6:30pm Minyo					
28	29	30				

DECEMBER: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						10:30am Explore Buddhism*
			1	2	3	4
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service* via YouTube, limited in-person	6:30pm Minyo					10:30am Explore Buddhism*
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Bodhi Day						10:30am Explore Buddhism*
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
					11:00pm Joya-no-kane (Year End Bell Ringing at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden)	
26	27	28	29	30	31	