

Hikari the Light



September 2020



Autumn has come to Alberta.

We see fallen leaves which already have started to turn their color on the street.

I look up at the sky; it is so blue and deep. It is peaceful.

The Covid 19 pandemic started in March, 2020. Since then my daily pattern has changed. I am sure the same is true for many people. We look forward to the end of the pandemic, but its winds seem to be blowing more severely. It is said that there are over 800,000 people in the world, who have lost their precious lives because of the pandemic. The number is still growing. Doctors encourage us all to use masks and keep social distance in large gathering in particular. But I hear many people, men and women, young and old do not practice these recommendations. Some ignore them, saying "I'll do whatever I want" not thinking of making troubles for other people. We should humbly listen to the medical authorities amid this kind of crisis. However, many people appear unaware of the importance of what doctors say until they themselves catch the virus. "Fire over the other side shore" kind of attitude is perhaps human nature.

In the Buddhist sutra it says: This world is a burning house. The people, unaware that the house is on fire, are in danger of being burned to death. This is a metaphor. Shinran Shonin of Shin Buddhism repeats the same sentiment: the burning house of the world of impermanence.

From the eyes of Buddha's wisdom our world is a constant burning house of birth and death. But we are busy running around with the thoughts of gain and loss, love and hate and we are not aware of life of impermanence. Human greed is so deep. How sad it is.

The sutra again says: The unchanging reality is the living and dying follow one after another without cease. At times, parents mourn the deaths of their children, and in turn, children mourn the deaths of their parents. Brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, cry over each other's deaths. That death may occur in the reverse order is the principle of impermanence. It is so true. Buddhism, however, is not a pessimistic teaching but a realistic teaching.

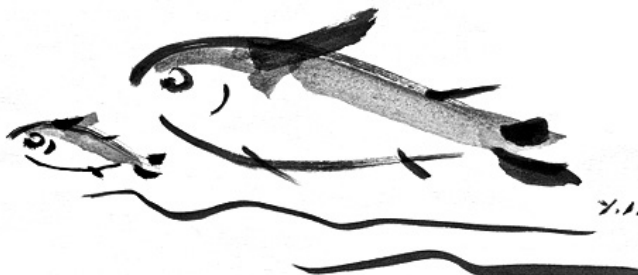
When I chant *Shoshinge* written by Shinran, I deeply appreciate the first two lines where Buddha calls us individually and personally: "Rely on Immeasurable Life of Compassion!" and "Rely on the Inconceivable Light of Wisdom!", right here and now embracing and supporting us.

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

無常ということ

今年になって十数人の方々が亡くなっておられますが、最近、二人の女性が60歳、58歳という、それぞれ比較的若い命を終えていかれました。お二人とも難しい病であったということですが、遺族の方々には、口には言えぬ深い悲しみの中にあったこととお察し致します。このお二人は大学を卒業し、社会的にも大変活躍をされていました。「無常の風来たりぬれば、すなわち、ふたつのまなこ、たちまちにとじ。。。」と蓮如上人の御文章にあります。無常という言葉は、「常ならず」ということですが、生きていくうちに親と別れ、子と別れ、友とも別れていくということです。そして最後には私もこの世から去っていかねばならないのです。全てが刻々に変化していくというこの事実は、私たちに深い悲しみと不安を感じさせます。しかし、一方、無常だからこそ、今ここに与えられている「一日」という尊さ、大切さにも気づかされるのでしょうか。そして、この「一日」に大きな有難さと、深い安らぎをもたらす働きが、お念仏のみ教えといえるのではないのでしょうか。お念仏は、仏様を思い、仏様に思われているということです。避けることの出来ない無常の人生に、苦しいこと、悲しいことがいろいろあったけれど、有難い一生でありましたと、お念仏申しながら安らかな人生を生かして頂きたいと思うことであります。

合掌 泉康雄



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403.327.1260 • www.theBTSA.com

Please Do Not Donate Items To the Temple Until Further Notice

The BTSA has been receiving a large number of donated items from temple members. While these donations are greatly appreciated we no longer have the storage capacity to receive any further items. Given the COVID pandemic it is unlikely that we will be able to hold a garage sale at the temple over the

next year. Please do not bring items to the temple even if you feel they are valuable and could be sold at a later date. When the pandemic is declared over by health authorities and we are able to safely hold rummage sales in the future we will make further announcements.

BTSA Notes from the Board of Directors

Sylvia Oishi has stepped down from the Board of Directors after 10 years. We appreciate all of her experience and balanced judgment on board matters and particularly her opinion on legal matters that the temple had to consider. She will continue to sit on the AV committee.

We have a new member of the board – Rachele Muskovich. She has been a member of the temple for three years and has been sitting on the Development committee and the AV committee. Her input into board matters will be greatly appreciated.

The building has had the solar panels installed and are operational. We are now generating electrical powers for our temple. Wesbridge Construction also installed snow guards on our roof. This was in order to be compliant with the request from our insurance provider in hopes we can avoid future damage to the temple from heavy snow fall.

The AV committee reported that the Podcast, *A Buddhist Life*, is now released, wherever podcasts are available. The first two episodes are about a good teacher and the Tannisho. Please have a listen to these podcast, subscribe and rate them. We hope to have several more available. Similarly a video interview with Izumi Sensei about his 50 years of being a minister in Canada is available on our YouTube channel and will be available in audio format on our podcast. Please go to the BTSA channel on YouTube to view it.

The board also approved the purchase of a new printer and copier for the board room. Our old copier is no longer functional.

In news about the BTSA relaunch it was decided that we will conduct limited in-person and live broadcast Sunday services starting with Shotsuki service on September 13. Similar to the Obon services, people who want to attend in person will need to sign-up using Signup Genius or by contacting Brenda Ikuta. We will have a limit of 67 people who can attend, in addition to the volunteers who will screen, run the service and AV system. There will be one service in September and one in October, which the board will then review to determine how to proceed. Please note the calendar on page 6.

The BTSA will also plan to restart the meditation sessions starting Sept. 10. They will run at 7 p.m. and will have quiet sitting, walking meditation and listening to chanting meditation. These meditation sessions will be run on the second and fourth Thursday evening of the month. These sessions will be run by Roland Ikuta and John Wolsey. Registration for the meditation classes are not necessary but participants will need to be screened for COVID purposes.

The Minyo dancers will continue to practice on Monday and Tuesday evenings. At the time of this notice it has not been determined if the Taiko group will restart but the Yoga sessions will not resume in September.

If you have any questions for the board please do not hesitate to contact Roland Ikuta at 403-317-0078 or by email at Rolikuta@shaw.ca

REGULAR EVENTS

Minyo Dance I Tuesdays @ 4:30pm

Minyo Dance II (Beginners Level) Mondays @ 6:30pm

*Fall registration and practice commence Monday, Sept. 21 and Tuesday, Sept. 22.

Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 or sas7@telus.net

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences

Lorraine Sueko Howlett (57) passed away on August 16, 2020

Kiyoko Shimoizawa (78) passed away on August 24, 2020

Exploring Buddhism Saturdays, starting Sept. 19, 10:30am to 12 noon. Come and join us for Exploring Buddhism, a study class to learn the history and fundamentals of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. You are welcome to an open and free discussion without judgement. This is open to the public and free of charge. Please contact the Temple office by phone at 403.327.1260 to pre-register as there is a limit on the number of people who can attend in line with the COVID-19 relaunch. Additional information can be found at our website at thebtsa.com

I heard the following: Weakness or Strength?

Sometimes your biggest weakness becomes your biggest strength. Take, for example, the story of one 10 year-old boy who decided to study judo despite having lost his left arm is a devastating car accident. The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he could not understand why, after three months of training the master had taught him only one move. "Sensei," the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

"This is only the move you know, but this is the only move you will ever need to know," the sensei replied. Not quite understanding but believing in his teacher the boy kept training.

Several month later, the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third match proved to be more difficult, but after awhile his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals. This time his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened. "No," the sensei insisted, "Let him continue." Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake; he dropped his guard. Instantly the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match.

On the way home, the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind. "Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons." the sensei answered. "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grip your left arm.' The boy's biggest weakness had been his biggest strength.

Yasuo Izumi, Minister

Garden Apple Tree

COVID-19 has affected BTSA's annual apple-pie making session with apples directly from the temple garden, but the apples completely oblivious to the virus continued to grow, following their own natural timetable. As autumn approaches, the harvest may be slim with most dropping to the ground, but their inevitable development impresses nonetheless.

Pictorially, check out garden activity over the summer with the unbemused Buddha.

Akira Ichikawa



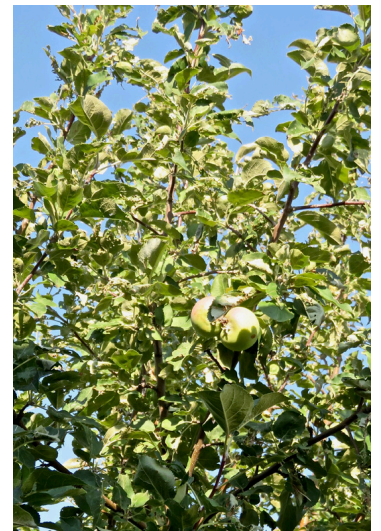
One of two apple trees



Low-hanging fruit, some beautifully colored



Meditating Buddha at the base



Need a ladder

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!

*You can fool some of the people all the time
and fool all the people some time,
but you cannot fool all the people all the time.*
— Lincoln

Membership to August 21 - 183

Obon Donations

August 2020

John & Rita Aoki
Jim & Atsuko Hagihara
Neil Hinatsu
Lily Kaga
Stanley & Audrey Kanegawa
Aki Kimoto
Dave & Val Kunimoto
May M. Matsumiya
Sheila Oishi
Doug Osaka
Roy & Pat Sassa
Sachi Scharf
Tomiko Sugimoto
Kazuko Takaguchi
Fugi Takeda
Ken & Ruby Yamamoto

Total - \$1,085

Shotsuki Hoyo

August 2020

John & Rita Aoki
Rumiko Ibuki
Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
Lily Kaga
Setsuko Ohno
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman
Harry Sugimoto
Fugi Takeda

Total - \$590

Other Donations

August 2020

Anonymous Cash Donations
Ayako Endo
Rumiko Ibuki
Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
Teiji Nakamura
Arlene Oishi & Jeff Coffman
Heidi Oishi
Sachi Scharf
Susan Michi & Darin Lee Sirovyak
Estate of Kazuko Sugimoto
Noriko Sugimoto
Takako Sugimoto
Kazuko Takaguchi
Fugi Takeda

Total - \$2,285

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.

The Temple in the Time of COVID19

The BTSA building has been shuttered for the most part since COVID-19 entered our lives in March. On a few occasions with strict restrictions it has hosted funerals and, of course, the Obon service in July. The board—as reported in its update elsewhere in this Hikari—decided to having Sunday services with restrictions in September. Those attending are requested to observe all rules connected with the opening. Meanwhile, look over these candid photos that may become familiar as you decide to visit the temple.



Restricted front entry



Back door



To East doors



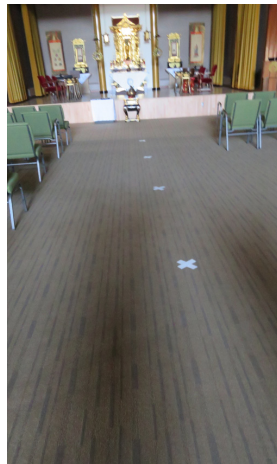
Welcome, but STOP first...



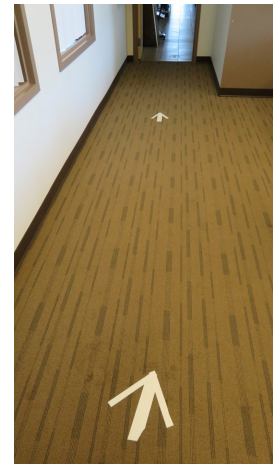
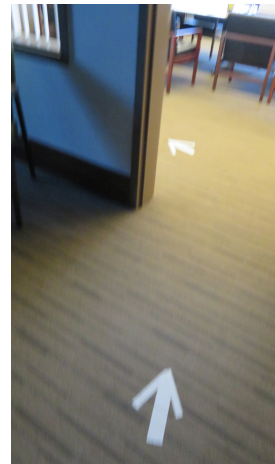
Sanitize hands...



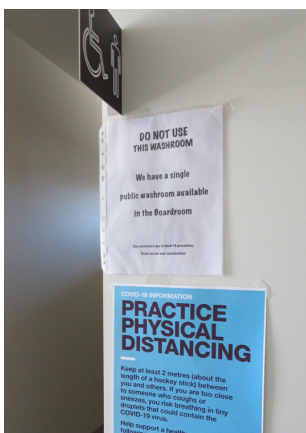
proceed to one of two entry stations...



Follow arrows for oshoko, exiting through the boardroom



Physical distancing seating



Only single-room restroom available



Cooler unavailable



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service* (please register to attend)	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

						10:30am Explore Buddhism*
				1	2	3
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service* (please register to attend)	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31