



## NATURE and Naturalness



This summer, people in southern Alberta have experienced very strange weather. How often have we seen stormy skies? We have had a lot of rain, thunder, hail, and then, flooding. Highways were blocked and damaged. Many bridges were under water. People had to be evacuated to safe places. Animals at the zoo also had to be moved. People helped each other and struggled to prevent further damage.

The weather in Alberta, in particular, can change suddenly. It is a common phenomenon here. We know that we are not able to manipulate it to our liking. We had better not think to conquer nature but follow the natural flow of life. For, from time to time, we learn that unpredictable nature brings us not only beauty and peace but also devastation and fear. By realizing this, we become humble before nature.

Nature is called *shizen* in Japanese. It is interesting to know that the same kanji character is used for spiritual liberation, the realm of the Buddha as well the Buddha's device for us to become a Buddha: to bring all sentient beings to the realm of enlightenment, true awakening of life. Although it is the same character, its pronunciation is *jinen* meaning "naturalness"

or "non-duality". Actually, the usage of *jinen*, which is a religious term, is much older than *shizen*, which is a rather scientific one. The working of the Buddha who tries to liberate us from delusion and suffering is operated beyond our calculation, beyond our small ego.

Venerable Shinran at the age of 88, wrote: *Ji* means "of itself" – not through our calculation. It signifies being just so. *Nen* means "to be made so" – it is not through our calculation; it is through the working of Buddha's vow. As the essential purport of the Vow, the Buddha of boundless compassion, vowed to bring us all to become a supreme Buddha. The Buddha of boundless compassion fulfills the purpose of making us know the significance of *jinen*.

Our calculative mind based on self-centricity does not bring us enlightenment. Enlightenment or true awakening of life is brought only by the working of the Buddha's vow emerging from true wisdom of oneness. This is called "naturalness of Buddha's working".

The word "Buddha" is not simply a noun but a verb, actively working for us and embracing us for our spiritual liberation. In knowing this, we humbly appreciate the working of Buddha's boundless compassion and joyfully respond to it, saying "Namo Amida Butsu" (I take refuge in Amida, the Buddha of infinite wisdom and boundless compassion) in deep gratitude.

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

### カナダ教団開教記念日

今年、浄土真宗カナダ教団は10月をもって、108年目を迎えます。「108」と言えば、仏教で度々言われる「108煩惱」を思い起こします。私たちが迎える108年目の教団を、一人ひとりが、わが身を省みる年、仏教徒として生きているだろうか、とすることを考える年、という機会としては如何でしょうか。108年の歴史を振り返ることも大事でしょうが、歴史と言うものは、とかく、その時その時の、わずかな権力を誇る人々によって、ゆがめられ、変わることがあります。

仏教は、常に、自分の煩惱を振り返ることを教えています。「無明煩惱」と言われるように、私たちは、むさぼり、怒りの心を持っているわけですが、しかも、それをごく当然のように無反省な生活をしているわけですが、この心によって、自他共に傷つけていることに気付かないのです。そのようなことが分からない智慧なき姿を、無明煩惱と呼びます。「自分」を問う、わが身を省みることのない話は、世間話ではあっても、仏教(仏法)の話にはなりません。人間の赤裸々な姿を照らし、育み、真実世界へと導く働きが、お念仏であります。それは、み仏の呼び声なのです。このことが忘れられると、108年の歴史を持つ私たちの教団も、単に損得の利害関係で繋がった人々の集まりになります。いよいよ、み仏の智慧と慈悲の世界を聴聞していきましょう。  
合掌 泉康雄

**BTSA Minister: REV. YASUO IZUMI**  
403.382.7024 • yasuo123@shaw.ca  
470-40 St S • Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5  
403.327.1260 • www.theBTSA.com

# BTSA NOTES

Following a languid summer, September marks the beginning of another active BTSA season, starting with the monthly memorial service for the month on the second Sunday. It was decided to schedule the September shotsuki on the second Sunday as many members are still holidaying through the Labour Day weekend.

We gear up on Sept. 21 with a mein-making session in preparation for the fall chow mein supper that this time around will see a slight change. It was decided by the planning committee to replace the sweet and sour entrée with teriyaki chicken drumette and two wings as both a cost- and labour-saving move.

As noted elsewhere, a trial run of the teriyaki will be held after the shotsuki service on Sept. 8.

A movie night is planned for Sept. 28 (Saturday), beginning with an udon dinner to raise funds to help in relief of the damages suffered during the June flooding in Calgary and others locations, especially High River. (See related story.)

The board also decided at its July meeting to provide \$500 worth of requested supplies. The temple donated supplies at the drop-off point (The Brick). Thanks to Val and Rich Boras, and Tom, Joyce and Mayah Shigehiro for looking after this

The annual JSBTC Day will be commemorated in October, and messages from Bishop Tatsuya Aoki and President Greg Chor can be found elsewhere in this issue. BTSA again will be requesting donations from its membership to support the propagation activities of the national organization.

Also, more will be forthcoming about the Alberta Buddhist Conference on Nov. 2, with Dr. Jeff Wilson as guest speaker.

Obon activities as usual were the highlights of the summer months, with cemetery services in various southern Alberta communities drawing many members and friends. Please look over the related article and items about the BTSA bon odori and services in this issue of the Hikari.

We look forward to your energetic support as we start up another season of temple activities.

Akira Ichikawa

# Messages from JSBTC Bishop and President on JSBTC Day

October heralds the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Day, and its bishop, Rev. Tatsuya Aoki, and its president, Greg Chor, solicit our help to continue the important work of Buddhist propagation in the country.

## Reflections on Chanting: Inspired by 108 Years of Buddhism in Canada

The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada celebrated its centennial celebration in 2005. Over the course of this more than a hundred years of history, there have been many changes to our lives and within the organization. Technological advancements have made it so we can fly to virtually anywhere in the world in a very short time. Cell phones and the internet have made our communications more instant. Medical advancements have made our ability to sustain our lives longer and longer and have made them considerably healthier also. Within our school as well, the name of the national organization has been changed from the Buddhist Churches of Canada to the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada. In the future there will certainly be other changes within our school.

All in all, in spite of the many changes from when we began, there have been no significant changes in the practice of what we do. The chanting and Nembutsu; saying the Name of Amida Buddha (Namo Amida Butsu), have remained essentially unchanged from the time we first began in Canada 108 years ago, and from Shinran Shonin's era 750 years ago. In particular, with regards to chanting, although we have tried to introduce a few new things over time at many of our temples, the form of the chant has remained remarkably consistent. There is a reason for this.

When Shinran Shonin says, "Take refuge in Pure Music", we realize that chanting brings us as close as it gets. Each person becomes a "pure sound", his or her own sound, like no other. When each voice is true to itself, it chants out loud; without embarrassment, without self-pride, and without calculation. Then each uniquely individual sound adds layer upon layer to the total sound. This is the sound of "oneness"; a tonal representation of our interconnected reliance on and responsibility to each other.

Rev. Masao Kodani, the resident minister of Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles, California, once said that; like Bon Odori (Obon Dance), the point is to, "just dance", the trick

### CHAIR SCHEDULE September 2013

**Sept 01**

Chair: Jack Nagai  
Audio: Tak Okamura

**Sept 08 SHOTSUKI\***

Chair: Robert Takaguchi  
Audio: John Dubbelboer

**Sept 15 OHIGAN**

Chair: Katie Nakagawa  
Audio: Sway Nishimura

**Sept 22**

(Sensei in Anaheim, CA)  
Chair: Deanna Jones  
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

**Sept 29**

Chair: Sheila Oishi  
Audio: Brenda Ikuta

**\*Note: September shotsuki is on the second Sunday.**

here is to, “just chant”. When we do our traditional chanting over and over, it is the sound that is important, not the meaning of the sounds. In many ways, knowing the meaning behind the sounds is a hindrance to it becoming a “pure sound”, because this is where our own calculating nature can slip in. Chanting in most Buddhist countries is done in a dead language, or at least, a highly unintelligible one. The sound of Buddhist chanting is remarkably similar, even when the chanting of it is in an unintelligible language. Singing texts in our own language, English is more an activity of the objectifying mind rather than a meditative activity of the body.

Before I was assigned to the Vancouver temple, the Japanese service (Howakai) on Thursdays included the chanting of Shoshinge in the modern Japanese language form which is called Shinjin no Uta. Although I preferred the Shoshinge chanted in kanbun (Chinese characters), I dutifully chanted the modern Japanese version for several months. After about a half a year though, the Japanese-speaking members asked me to return to the original chanting style of the Shoshinge as written in Chinese. They said that although the older Chinese style was much more difficult to understand; as chanting, it was much more meaningful to them. It was meaningful because it was allowed to simply exist as “Pure Music”.

One studies the sutras in translation or in its original language for intellectual understanding. One chants the sutras for body understanding. One is theory, the other is practice. Just like a bird, both wings need to flap in balance, to fly. Our ego makes us control freaks; we want to understand things from our own point of view, in our own way, in our own time, and in circumstances under our control. Chanting is learning to join the flow, not control it. In that flow there is nothing to do but to “just appreciate”, to “just enjoy”! I wish to see our Jodo Shinshu Temples continue to be a place of joy and appreciation.

Although we each belong to a temple near where we live, it is very important to recognize that each one of us is a member of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada. On this occasion of our Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Day, may we rediscover our joy by listening to the Dharma and walking the path of the Nembutsu together!

Namo Amida Butsu,  
Tatsuya Aoki

## A Message from JSBTC President

Greetings to all temple members and friends,

With the return of the Fall, the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) Day is before us. The JSBTC Day, held annually in October, marks the founding of this national organization that brings all Jodo Shinshu followers together as one national Buddhist community. This organization was founded in October, 1974 as the official organization by which the mother temple, the Nishi Hongwanji, in Kyoto, Japan supports the efforts of Jodo Shinshu followers in Canada. JSBTC Day also gives us the opportunity to commemorate and express our gratitude to those who preceded us in the propagation of Buddhism in Canada.

The donations received at the temples from this special JSBTC Day go towards the health and education of present and future ministers, and to support the work of Bishop. Indeed, without the support from contributors there would be a financial challenge for the Board to maintain and undertake programs. I am sure you will learn about other facets of the significance of JSBTC Day in your minister’s Dharma message.

We look forward to your attendance and support on this very special day.

In Gassho and deep gratitude,  
Living in the Dharma with both hands together...  
Greg Chor, President, JSBTC

## BUDDHIST Q & A

**I hear that our national organization (Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple of Canada) is rapidly declining in terms of the membership. What should we do?**

Sakyamuni Buddha said that a Buddhist organization that follows the seven rules will never decline. These rules are: 1) Buddhists should gather together frequently to listen to the Dharma and to discuss it. 2) They should mingle freely and respect one another. 3) They should revere the dharma and respect the rules and not change them. 4) Elder and young members are to treat each other with courtesy. 5) They should let sincerity and reverence mark their bearing. 6) They should purify their minds and offer things to others first. 7) They should love all people, treat visitors cordially and console the sick with kindness. (Y. I.)

**Total Members as of August 24: 220**

**Shotsuki Hoyo Donations**

July & August 2013

Rita Ritsuko & John M Aoki  
Shirley Higa  
Hideo & June Hinatsu  
Tomi Hisaoka  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Toshimi & Marian Ibuki  
Susumu & Teruko Ikuta  
Gene & Shannon Kawade  
Hiroshi Kitagawa  
Hideko Nishi  
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura  
Mac & Reyko Nishiyama  
Noriko Oga  
May Ohno  
Lilly Oishi  
Toshino Shigemi  
Nobuko & Mary Shono  
Fumi Sugimoto  
Noboru & Kazuko Sugimoto  
Fuji Takeda  
Brenda & Lester Tanner  
Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita  
Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima

**Total \$1,105**

**Obon Donations**

July 2013

Jane Adachi  
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Yosh & Sue Aimoto  
Eiko Aoki  
Dr Arnold Arai  
Joanne Arnold  
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Stan Bandura  
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Tsuyoshi & Mariko Hironaka  
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Terry Horii  
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Tomiko Sugimoto  
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Carolyn Terakita  
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Ken & Ruby Yamamoto  
Minoru Yoshida  
Aiko Yoshihara  
Gord & Sandra Zacher

**Total - \$13,750**

**Other Donations**

July & August, 2013

Dick Adachi  
Elizabeth Adachi  
Rita Ritsuko & John M Aoki  
Sunao & Kaye Ayukawa  
Rachel Crowder  
and Vicki MacArthur  
Judy Fukushima  
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Shinako (Sheila) Higa  
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Hideo & Jennifer Nishida  
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Yosh & Yoko Terakita  
Teruko Tokitsu  
Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita  
Kaz & Marjory Tomomitsu  
Keiko Kay Tsukishima  
Yasuo & Lil Yamashita

**Total - \$11,925**

We try to be as thorough as possible but occasionally make errors. Please inform us if your name has been omitted from or misspelled in the donation lists. Anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print, please let us know so it won't be published. Thank you.

## REGULAR EVENTS

**Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir** meetings will be announced.  
New singers welcome!  
Contact: Katie Nakagawa 403. 327.4296 or katieinak@shaw.ca

**Tonari Gumi** will resume September 3  
Tuesdays, 12-3pm

**Taiko Class** will resume September 10 (Adult).  
Junior Taiko TBA  
Contact: David Tanaka at 403.330.1548 or david@eyesquared.com

**The Lethbridge Karaoke Club** will resume September 11.  
Wednesdays, 1pm

**Women's Federation World Convention Craft Group** will meet the third  
Sunday of each month starting September 15.  
Contact: Totsy Nishimura 403.752.3435 or swayn@telusplanet.net

## PROGRAMS

**Japanese Dharma Talk** (日本語法話)  
Wednesdays, September 4 & 11, October 16 from 9am to 10am

**Chanting and Chatting** (Sutra Chanting)  
Saturdays, October 5 & 12 from 9:00am to 10am  
(Text is available. Please contact Rev. Izumi at 403.382.7024)

**Gentle Yoga for Seniors**  
Thursday 10 - 11am  
September 19 - November 14, No class October 31

**Aiki Breathing**  
Mondays 11am -12:30 pm  
September 16 - November 18  
No class: October 14 or November 11

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Condolences**  
The BTSA expresses heartfelt sympathy to those who have lost loved ones:  
**Kazumi Oikawa (82) on July 22**

**Wedding Congratulations**  
Trent Masumi Takeyasu & Veronica Elizabeth Horn, July 13  
Alexander Hiroshi Todd & Erika Margaret Tompson, Aug 17

**Monto Shiki Sho WBWC Fundraiser**  
LAST PRE-ORDER! Deadline September 15  
Deanna Jones will collect all orders.

## 2013 Membership Form

Full Membership  Student Membership\*  
(\$100 for each member)

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, Province, Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check to receive The Hikari newsletter by Email only.

## MOVIE NIGHT at the Temple and fundraiser

ONE WEEK Saturday, September 28

A Canadian film about a man who travels across Canada as he finds out he has terminal cancer and how he discovers himself.

An Udon dinner will be served at 6:30 PM, with the movie following at 7:30 PM.

Funds raised will go toward those who suffered from the flooding in Calgary and High River.



## TOBAN UPDATE

Contact lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com or 403.327.1668

### Toban Schedule

September	Toban 1	November	Toban 3
October	Toban 2	December	Toban 4

Thanks to **Tobans 3 & 4** for covering the summer months for Sunday tea and clean up. Special appreciation to **Toban 3** for the delicious O Bon Supper and additional preparations during July.

September will mark the last tour of duty for **Toban 1** who will retire at months end. Thanks to Lilly and Sheila Oishi for your dedication over the past years. Appreciation is extended all of Toban 1 members and friends, most of whom will be joining other Tobans.

Please send this form and your remittance to:  
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta  
Treasurer  
470 40th Street South  
Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

### Notes

\*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 of membership does not include membership in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada.

**LET'S EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THE DHARMA!**

Hikari the Light

# 2013 BON ODORI July 20

Sizable crowds enlivened the Obon weekend July 20 at the bon odori in Galt Gardens, and July 21 at the Mountain View Cemetery and the BTSA Obon services.

Harry Bridge sensei, resident minister of the Oakland (CA) Buddhist Temple, was the guest speaker at the Obon service.

Bridge sensei, born in Tokyo and raised in the United States and Japan, spoke about the distinction between change—a tenet of Buddhism—and transformation by recalling episodes from his personal life. He said that change occurs whether we know it or not, but transformation takes place with influences on us from without.

The message touched on how, during the Obon season, it was appropriate to consider the ways in which the actions of others affect our everyday lives. By way of example, he said he was asked to organize a reunion of his high school class. Without any planning skills, he nonetheless proceeded and realized later that the help of others not only helped him but also worked to transform him.

An estimated 200 persons attended the Obon service which also was the monthly memorial services for July and August.

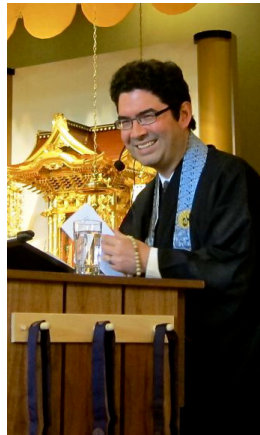
The temple acknowledges with deep gratitude all those members and friends who gave their time and energy to set-up and tear-down for the bon odori and to Toban 3 for preparing the naijin and Obon supper. Many thanks to Bridge sensei, Izumi sensei, and everyone who contributed to the meaningful weekend.



Bon Odori, July 20



Cemetery service, July 21



Obon service, July 21  
Harry Bridge sensei





## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Formal classes will resume September 15. There will be a **Dharma committee meeting** on Sunday, Sept. 8 after service to plan projects for the coming year. This will take place in the Dharma room. Please attend if you are interested in the program and/or have ideas for activities and lessons.

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## Fall Chow Mein Supper, October 19 • Mein-Making, September 21

The 2013 fall chow mein supper on Oct. 19 will have a new look. After so many years, it was decided to replace the sweet and sour ribs with teriyaki chicken drumettes and wings.

The rationale for the switch relates to both labor and cost, with the hope that the workload and preparation time will be lighter and shorter and the chicken wings less expensive than pork. The temple will hold a sample run on Sept. 8, after the monthly memorial service to test the wings.

As in the past, 2,000 meals will be prepared. Price of a ticket will remain at \$10. Soon, a general call will go out for member help and support for ticket sales and food preparation.

In advance of the supper, the temple has scheduled Sept. 21 for mein-making. Volunteers and helpers are requested to turn out in great number to produce this key ingredient.

Proceeds go toward meeting temple expenses over the year.



# Schedule 光 September & October 2013

## Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要 (service in English)

Please bring Homyo (Buddhist Name) of your loved one. 法名をご持参ください。

SEPTEMBER: TOBAN 1

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10:30am Regular Service	1	2	12pm Tonari Gumi 3	10:30am Dharma talk in Japanese 4	5	6	7
10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service	8	9	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 10	10:30am Dharma talk in Japanese 1pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 11	12	13	14
10:30am Regular Service	15	11am Aiki Breathing 16	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 17	1pm Karaoke 18	10am Gentle Yoga 19	20	Mein-making 21
10:30am Regular Service	22	11am Aiki Breathing 23	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 24	1pm Karaoke Ministers' Seminar 25	10am Gentle Yoga Ministers' Seminar 26	Ministers' Seminar 27	Movie Night at the Temple 6:30pm dinner 7:30pm movie 28
10:30am Regular Service	29	11am Aiki Breathing 30					

OCTOBER: TOBAN 2

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 1	1pm Karaoke 2	10am Gentle Yoga 3	4	9am Sutra Chanting 5
10:30am Shotsuki Memorial Service	6	11am Aiki Breathing 7	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 8	1pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 9	10am Gentle Yoga 10	11	9am Sutra Chanting 12
10:30am Regular Service JSBTC Day	13	14	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 15	10:30am Dharma talk in Japanese 1pm Karaoke 16	10am Gentle Yoga 17	18	19
10:30am Regular Service	20	11am Aiki Breathing 21	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 22	1pm Karaoke 23	10am Gentle Yoga 24	25	26
10:30am Regular Service	27	11am Aiki Breathing 28	12pm Tonari Gumi 7pm Adult Taiko 29	1pm Karaoke 30	31		