



## The Buddha of Immeasurable Life

**“Oh Buddha, today we are able to meet you, and we all rejoice in hearing the voice of the Buddha of immeasurable Life. Thus, our mind is brightened.”**

During Covid 19 pandemic I trust you and your family are doing well.

Above I quoted a passage from the Larger Sutra which is a very important sutra among numerous sutras Shakyamuni Buddha expounded and left during his 80 year of his life in India.

“Our mind” in this quotation means the mind of those disciples who listened to Shakyamuni Buddha’s teaching. And of course, we who listen to his teaching today beyond time and place are also included. So, our mind will be brightened.

One day, Shakyamuni Buddha talked about the Buddha of immeasurable life. The Buddha of immeasurable life means Amida Buddha. Here we can see a visual presentation of Amida Buddha of immeasurable life. (Here, Sensei points to the image of Amida on the *naijin*.) A visual presentation is called *hoben* in Japanese. It means to come closer to us, to approach us with the form out of great compassion.

In other words, the image of Amida Buddha is over there but actually Amida Buddha, the Buddha of immeasurable life, is here and now, embracing us. We must take Amida Buddha in our own heart knowing that Amida Buddha appears solely to save and liberate us from delusion.

The word Amida is Sanskrit, an old language used in India. *A-Mida*, no-measure, meaning immeasurable or infinite beyond us. In this life, and our

world, whatever we can see and touch is measurable. And whatever is measurable is changing and disappearing. For example, I am standing here. You can measure me, a small man about 5’1 or 5’2. I am shrinking and one day I will disappear.

So, everything we can see and touch is measurable and constantly changing and disappearing. Everything is changing. Nothing remains unchanged in this world. This is a simple truth of our world. And yet, we cling and attach to whatever we see and touch with our selfish mind and then we create our own delusion and suffering.

For our delusion and suffering, the immeasurable Buddha, Amida Buddha, is moving toward us with compassion and calls us to become one with the voice of *namo amida butsu*.

This calling voice of *namo amida butsu* moves in our measurable, changing life. Shinran Shonin who heard the voice of Amida’s compassion wrote: “*Seeing the sentient beings of the nembutsu, namo amida butsu / Through the world of ten quarters, / The Buddha grasps and never abandon them, / And therefore is named ‘Amida’.*”

We are always grasped and never to be abandoned by Amida Buddha here and now. No wonder our elderly people, in particular, do not ask where they are going after they die. Reciting *namo amida butsu* in gratitude, they know they are always grasped and never abandoned by Amida, the Buddha of Immeasurable life. How great it is! Thus, our mind is brightened in this difficult and painful world where things do not go as we wish.

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

### 限りない「いのち」

厳しい冬がやってきました。そのうえ昨年12月31日に世界保健機関が発表した新型コロナウイルスは、いよいよ荒れ狂っています。このウイルスのために、すでに世界で約110万という老若男女が、尊い命を失っています。実に痛ましく、驚く死者の数です。

釈尊は「生あるものは死に帰す」と教えていますが、悲しみ、苦しみ、不安の中にある人々には、そのような言葉は届かないでしょう。むしろ、「そんなことは知っている」とか「なんと冷たい言葉か」と反発されるだけでありましょう。しかし落ち着いて考えてみれば、その言葉は、私たち一人一人の目前にある事実を指摘しているのです。だからこそ、釈尊は、この限りある私たちの命の中に、アミダという限りない「いのち」が常に働いていることに目覚めよ、と教えているのでしょう。

しかも、日々、自己中心的に忙しく働き、目覚めることなど考えられない私たちに、阿弥陀という限りのない「いのち」が、自ら「ナモアミダブツ」の呼び声となって私たちのために働いて下さっているのです。その呼び声を私の「いのち」として聞いていくことが、悲しみや、不安の中にあっても力強く、報恩の心をもって生きていくことが出来る道ではないでしょうか。

合掌 泉康雄



## BTSA Notes from the Board of Directors

In news about the BTSA relaunch , the second Shotsuki service was held Oct. 4 with in-person attendance. (See related photo essay elsewhere.) There were about 50 people who attended and it was also made available on our You Tube channel.

**Unfortunately, due to increasing numbers of COVID cases in Lethbridge and two recent outbreaks from churches in the Lethbridge area, the board of directors has decided to suspend further in-person activities at the temple. This includes attendance at Sunday services, meditation classes, odori practice and Explore Buddhism classes. However, the Explore Buddhism group headed by Izumi Sensei will continue to meet via Zoom every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. If you are interested in joining please contact Roland for a Zoom invitation.**

We will make the Shotsuki services available on our YouTube channel for Nov 1 at 10:30 a.m. If you want to watch it live go to the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta channel on YouTube. It will also be recorded. Also please consider joining Rev. Grant Ikuta at the Steveston Buddhist Temple every Saturday at 11 a.m. for his weekly Zoom Sunday Service. You can save the link below or contact Roland for a link to the Zoom invitation: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88560730881>

### Special General Meeting

During the special meeting of the general membership the two motions to have more than two signatories for our Bank of Montreal (BMO) account and to allow members to receive payment for specific duties was passed. Thanks to the members who attended the meeting.

### Funerals

In case of a funeral, with the temple now closed again for in person services we will have to proceed with family only services which can be broadcast live via our YouTube channel. If there is a need for a funeral please contact Izumi sensei or Roland.

### Casino Fundraiser

Currently, the appointed BTSA Volunteer Casino date is still planned to occur. It is to be held on Nov. 26-27. Thanks to all who have volunteered to work at the casino.

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](mailto:Rolikuta@shaw.ca)

### Condolences

**Richard Shigenobu Kanegawa** (90) Oct 8

**Kiyomi Dawn Sakamoto** (64) Oct 10

## The Temple in October... and in Snow



The changeable weather in autumn was on full display on Oct. 4 shotsuki Sunday with pleasant, summer-like temperatures and blue skies giving way later on Oct. 23 to a fierce harbinger of winter, complete with windy grey skies and snow. photos: Akira Ichikawa



# Judgment

Let me tell you about an experience which I will never forget.

When I was transferred from southern Alberta where my family spent six years, to the Vancouver Buddhist Temple in 1976, the environment around the Vancouver temple was terrible. There were prostitutes and drug dealers around the temple. The temple building was also in bad shape. The building used to be a United Church and members of the Temple bought it in 1954.

When I was assigned there, the second floor was not used. It was a playground for mice. One Sunday, I remember, two mice came down to the naijin and were eating manju while we had a Sunday service. The two mice were enjoying the manju in front of the statue of Amida Buddha!

Three years later in 1979, a new temple was built at the same location. But the environment around the temple remained the same. It was really poor and bad. Sometimes I saw a drunken man lying on the street in front of the temple.

One day, I saw two poorly-dressed middle-aged men sitting on the steps of the temple entrance. They were quietly looking at the park across the street. They were just sitting at the center of the steps of the temple entrance. ( In those days there was an iron bar entrance) They did not move from there. It bothered me. I was not happy to see them sitting on the temple entrance steps – occupying the center of the steps, showing their backs to the Buddha. Ten minutes passed. Twenty minutes passed. They did not move. I thought I should ask them or rather order them to move to somewhere else. They were disturbing the temple visitors although there were usually only few visitors because of the bad and dangerous environment.

Two men continued just sitting as if they were ignoring my concern. Many questions came to my mind. “Are they homeless? They must be, because they dress so poorly. Are they drug dealers? They must be, because they don’t look lively. Do they know they are sitting in front of a Buddhist temple? Maybe they do not. They didn’t care to respect the sacred place. But wait. Do they move if I tell them to move? Or they don’t listen to me or at worse they might attack me.” These thoughts came to me one after another and made me irritated.

After over a half an hour or so passed, I decided to tell them not to sit at the temple entrance. I approached them and told looking down with courage. “Excuse me. You know this is a Buddhist temple. You should not sit here. Please move to another place.”

To my surprise, they politely apologized to me, saying, “Oh, we are very sorry. We know this is the temple but could we sit here for a while?”

“What!?! Don’t be nonsensical”, I thought. Then one of them showed me his I.D. They were under-cover police officers! They were watching somebody of interest at the park. How embarrassed I was! To this day, I can’t forget this incident.

We have a judgmental mind. For example, we tend to judge others from appearances. A mind to judge is difficult to get rid of. It is deeply attached to us. It is our creation – creation of our ego-mind. It is like we are wearing colored eye- glasses to see the outside world.

These misjudgments and misunderstandings created by self-attachment can be awakened and corrected only by the working beyond our small self of what we call Amida Buddha. And that awareness, in turn, frees us and gives us a totally different perspective that we did not have before. We are thrown from the life chained by our small cage of ego-self. The words namo amida butsu (I rely on Amida Buddha) bubbles out from our mouth in deep gratitude.

Yasuo Izumi





# Peace Declaration

JSBTC Socho Tatsuya Aoki sensei noted the Hongwanji Bishop's Peace Declaration Article on the Hongwanji Website observing the 40th annual memorial service for all who perished in war, with special reference to the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. Socho Aoki thought it worthy of reprinting in temple newsletters.

It is reprinted in English below and Japanese on the following page. Readers also may go directly to the website : [https://www.hongwanji.or.jp/news/upload\\_img/000998-eng.pdf](https://www.hongwanji.or.jp/news/upload_img/000998-eng.pdf)

## Peace Declaration

We are gathered here today on September 18 to observe the 40th Annual Memorial Service for All Who Perished in War, and particularly, this year marks the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. Unfortunately, however, the entire world is facing a crisis that humanity has never experienced, at least in modern times. Last December, a mysterious pneumonia-like disease was reported by the media, and within a blink of an eye, the virus has been rampaging throughout the world. This new infectious disease was named COVID-19, and its pathogen has yet to be specified. At present, the death toll count is more than 900,000 and there is no sign of it slowing down. Nonetheless, under such circumstances, we have the determination to maintain the tradition of holding the memorial because we find it meaningful to reflect on the significance of having it.

In 2015 on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the end of the war, we released a recorded discussion that resulted from a dialogue on peace. Here, we pointed out the necessity of 'positive peace,' which can be achieved only by overcoming various social or systematic problems that could induce warfare. Social inequality, violation of basic human rights like freedom of religion, hunger, and even environmental crisis are all the issues that we need to deal with to realize a peaceful society.

However, in a surge of the pandemic, many people hoarded facemasks and other necessities, which were then in short supply, and there were even instances of some who resold those products at a greatly inflated price. Furthermore, another outstanding concern is the social exclusion of those who were infected with the disease, and this discrimination is directed even toward the patients' families. Thus, this new infectious disease is disclosing our hidden self-centeredness as well as ignorance that easily violates the dignity of other lives.

Our Head Priest, Monshu Sennyō states in his message, 'A Way of Living as a Nembutsu Follower' as follows,

In today's world, there is an endless list of difficult global issues that are directly related to the existence of humanity such as terrorist attacks, armed conflicts, widening economic gap, global warming, mishandling of nuclear waste, and violation of human rights through discrimination. Such are the result of our ignorance and blind passions in which we fail to see the true nature of ourselves.

Through this message, he clarifies that our egoistic human nature is the very origin of many of the global issues, and we must take this seriously.

Monshu also introduces the following Buddhist principle in the same message,

Buddhism describes the true reality of this world and humanity using such phrases as 'impermanence' and 'dependent origination.' 'Impermanence' refers to the fact that everything changes moment by moment. On the other hand, 'dependent origination' explains that all things and phenomena are interconnected with one another, which bring about various causes and conditions that then give another set of causes and conditions and so on and so forth. Therefore, in this world we cannot find an unchanging and fixed 'self.'

Now I would like to introduce the following haiku poem composed by Nagayama Shusei,

*In the middle of rice planting, the rain comes, and everything becomes even more lively.*

Every life receives the benevolence of nature. None can survive without air, soil, or water. It goes without saying for us humans as well. We are enabled to live because we take other lives to receive nourishment from them. We all are interrelated to one another and everyone is enabled to live because things allow us to be. In addition, things are changing at every moment, which means there is no solid or unchangeable matter or phenomenon in this world.

Therefore, once we realize this ultimate reality of dependent origination, we cannot help but want to make efforts for the benefit of ourselves as well as others even though the result of our efforts is unknown, because unlike the Buddha who has boundless wisdom and compassion, we are imperfect and our ability is limited. Being fully aware of our own limitedness, still we can try as hard as we can to control and minimize our ego, arrogance, attachment, and belligerence, feeling close to other people's joy and sadness. The path to our ideal peaceful world can be found only when we overcome the current hardship by making sincere efforts to realize a society of peace and harmony, not one of conflicts and exclusion.

With the wish for peace, temple bells shall be tolled across Japan. Our aspiration for peace for the world, which reverberates through the sound of the bells, shall reach our children and grandchildren. Now let us continue our efforts together.

September 18, 2020

Governor General Iwagami Chiko  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

## 平和宣言

いま世界は、現代人がかつて経験したことのない危機に直面しています。

昨年2019年12月、病原体が特定されていない肺炎が報告され、その後、新型コロナウイルス感染症と称されるこの病気は、瞬く間に世界中にひろがりました。現在までに死者数は約90万人以上にのぼり、いまなお感染の勢いは収まる様子を見せていません。

このような中、歳月は人を待たず流れ、本年も9月18日を迎えました。本日ごご国立・千鳥ヶ淵戦没者墓苑において関係者が集い、第40回千鳥ヶ淵全戦没者追悼法要を修行いたします。特にこの厳しい状況の中で、終戦75年という節目のご法要を行うことの意義を改めて考えることは大切なことです。

私たち浄土真宗本願寺派は、戦後70年にあたる2015年、「平和に関する論点整理」を発表しました。その中で、公平・平等・信教の自由を含む人権の尊重・飢餓の克服・環境問題など、争いを引き起こす構造的な課題を解決することで成り立つ「平和」、すなわち「積極的平和」の必要性を指摘しました。しかしながら、マスクや日用品を我先にと買い占める姿や、それらを転売する行為が報道されたり、感染者に対して苦しみを共有しようとせずに、その家族までも排除しようとする行為が話題になるなど、新型コロナウイルス感染症は、人間の内面に潜む自己中心性をあらわにさせ、他のいのちの尊厳を冒す人間の無明煩惱がもたらす姿を改めて明らかにしています。

専如ご門主は、ご親教「念仏者の生き方」において、

「テロや武力紛争、経済格差、地球温暖化、核物質の拡散、差別を含む人権の抑圧など、世界規模での人類の生存に関わる困難な問題が山積していますが、これらの原因の根本は、ありのままの真実に背いて生きる私たちの無明煩惱にあります」

とお示しになりました。

宗祖親鸞聖人のみ教えを、わかりやすく示されたこのご門主のお言葉は、いままさに世界中で起こっている差別や紛争、貧困や環境破壊など、これらの問題は自己中心的な心で行動してしまう私たち人間の内面にこそ、その原因があるとの鋭いご指摘と受け止めなければなりません。

またご門主は、同じご親教で

「仏教では、この世界と私たちのありのままの姿を『諸行無常』と『縁起』という言葉で表します。(中略)『縁起』とは、その一瞬ごとにすべての物事は、原因や条件が互いに関わりあって存在しているという真実です。したがって、そのような世界のあり方の中には、固定した変化しない私というものも存在しません」

とご教示になっています。

次のような俳句があります。

「降りだして 田植えいよいよ にぎやかに」(長山秋生)

空と大地と水と、そのつながりの中で人も生きています。食料に恵まれ、無事、食べられる。水も喉を通ってくださる。そのお蔭で、いま生きています。人はみな縁起する事実の中で生かされ、いのちをあらしめられているのです。しかも大事なことは、すべての現象は縁起していますから、変わらない固定したすがた・かたちは何もないということです。

ですから、仏さまのように完全にはできなくても、私たちは、縁起というありのままの真実に教え導かれ、精進するのです。自他をわけ、かまえ、執われ、対立する心を限りなくおさえ、人と喜びや悲しみを分かち合うなど、日々に精いっぱいいつとめるのです。対立や排除ではなく、心を通い合わせ、痛みを分け合い、協力し合って生きていく社会の実現に向け共に努力する先にこそ、この厳しい苦難を乗り越え、平和をより確かなものにする道が切り開かれていくことでしょう。

本日、この同じ時に全国各地の寺院から、平和の鐘の音が鳴り響きます。鐘の響きに込められた私たちの願いが、世界へ、子や孫へ届いてゆくよう、共に精いっぱいいつとめてまいりましょう。

2020(令和2)年9月18日

浄土真宗本願寺派

総長 石上智康



# 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 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 October 24 - 189

### Shotsuki Hoyo October 2020

John & Donna Dubbelboer  
Judy Fukushima  
Neil Hinatsu  
Lois Hinz  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Ray Matsuda  
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno  
Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng  
Setsuko Ohno  
Heidi Oishi  
Doreen G. Osaka  
Doug Osaka  
Larry Osaka  
Yumiko Osaka  
Bob & Eiko Shigehiro  
Joe & Mary Shigehiro  
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro  
Tomiko Sugimoto  
Robert & Judy Takaguchi  
Fugi Takeda  
Blaine Takeda  
Kenneth B. Takeda & Lila Ho-Takeda  
Glen & Pamela Tanaka  
June Tanaka  
Masaye Tanaka  
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama  
Tak & Yoko Tsujita

**Total - \$1,535**

### Other Donations October 2020

Valerie Deveau  
John & Donna Dubbelboer  
Rumiko Ibuki  
Akira Ichikawa  
Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi  
Hisashi & Estate of Kiyoko Shimozawa

**Total - \$465**

## October Shotsuki

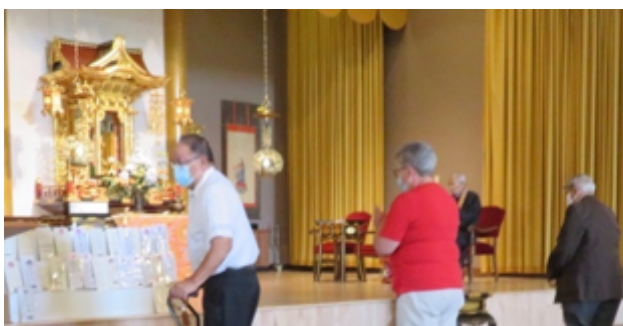
A memorial for the month of October was held the first Sunday in the month with careful precautions taken because of the pandemic. The memorial--or *shotsuki* in Japanese--is an occasion to remember departed loved ones and at the same time to think of our own life in the ever-changing world as Izumi sensei reminded all in his dharma talk.



Physically-distance seating during the service



Izumi sensei's talk



Offering homage at the naijin



Chairperson Joyce Shigehiro emcees service



Dr. Ikuta's announcements