



December 2011

How Arigatai and How Mottainai!

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Inter-faith conference held in Cranbrook, B.C. The theme was “Love of Country is Part of My Faith.”

Each representative of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism spoke on the theme. After the presentation there was a question and answer period. The interesting thing was that many questions came to me, a Buddhist.

It is said that Buddhism is a fast growing religion in the world. However, many people are still not really familiar with Buddha’s teaching. And yet, I think, many of them know that Buddhism is a peaceful teaching. This is one of the reasons that Buddhism attracts many people in this turbulent and confused age.

One of the questions I was asked was “Who created the world?” This is a common question since Buddhism does not talk about God. Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism all talk about a Supreme Being, God, Allah or Brahman. They have an answer to the question, “Who created the world?”

But Buddhism does not. It is because, for Buddhists, there is no such concept of God or creator. Buddhists talk about “how the world was created” instead of “who created the world.” I think Buddhists see the world not in a vertical way but in a horizontal way.

In the first paragraph of Homages, we read “Hard it is to be born into human life; now we are living it.” This short and simple

sentence suggests the Buddhist idea of not “who” but “how” the world is created.

I do not think other religions talk about human birth in this way. Why is it hard to be born? It is because there are many causes and conditions, seen and unseen connections, that make our birth here and now. “I” come to being through various causes and conditions. Therefore, our birth as a human is Arigatai, meaning “hard to come by” or “difficult to be”.

So we say “Arigato, Thank you”. Here, “you” includes all causes and conditions, not necessarily a specific, individual “you”. From time to time, the elderly Japanese Buddhists say “Arigatai-na” (“na” is an expression of an exclamation and agreement), “How precious it is! How grateful I am!”

They also use the word “Mottainai”. The word “Mottainai” is becoming a universally used term. Our choir sings “Mottainai” in English and Japanese. The song has also been sung recently in Japan and Hawaii by people of many different races.

The expressions of Arigatai and Mottainai are almost identical. However, “Mottainai” in kanji characters literally mean “things do not exist but exist.” What does it mean? It means all existence arises interdependently. Each thing, including “I” is a composition and combination of various causes and conditions.

But when causes and conditions fall apart and are gone there is no existence any more. All existence comes about temporarily or in a provisional way. Therefore, things here and now are so precious, so rare and so unique! “Mottainai” usually translates into English “not to waste” but actually it means “How precious it is!”, even if we have an abundance of materials and time. Accordingly, we should not waste things. We should not waste this moment.

Buddhists view birth into the human race as a rare occurrence. It is so precious that we should not waste this moment. Only humans are able to listen and appreciate the teaching. We must listen to the teaching of the Buddha, Now. We must meet the light of Amida’s wisdom and compassion through which we are nurtured and truly able to appreciate things around us and human life in each moment. Otherwise we are wasting this opportunity... How Mottainai, How Arigatai!

In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Minister of BTSA

年末におもう

毎年今頃になりますと、ある方が年間の予定表ブックを持ってきて下さいます。ああ、もう今年も終わりなるのだなあ、時間の早さを思います。この一年、何をしてきたのだろうかと思うのですが、古い予定表ブックにはいろいろと書かれてあります。確かに一年が過ぎていこうとしているのです。仏教では、「今、ここ」ということを教えています。過去は、文字どおり「過ぎ去って」しまっています。未来は、「未だ来たらず」です。実際生きているのは、「今、ここ」です。その「今、ここ」も「はく息、入るを待たず」というような瞬間的なもので、つかむことは出来ません。

若いころカリフォルニアのパークレーに居たことがあります。ヒッピーが流行っていたところで、彼らは「マリワナ吸って、今を楽しんでいる。。。」と無責任なことを言っていました。仏教で言う「今、ここ」は、過去と未来を含む「今、ここ」です。「今、ここ」とは、過ぎ去った日々の実りであり、同時に「今、ここ」とは、未来への種まき中である、ということなのです。しかも、独りで生きている人生ではありませんから、「今、ここ」ということには、責任がついてまいります。

年末には、ゆっくりと一年を振り返り、学び、そして聞法を通して、新しい未来へ向かいたいと思っています。合掌 泉

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

BTSA Notes

As year's end inexorably approaches, we're keenly aware of the many Dharma friends who died during the year and remember them with great fondness and gratitude. They and others before them teach us life's impermanence, a key tenet of Jodo Shinshu; and it is a life intricately interwoven with them. We're beneficiaries of their legacy that lives on daily and in our temple. A big thanks to all the members who worked so tirelessly and with good humor throughout the year to keep the temple operating so smoothly. We look forward to your continued support throughout the new year.

Please note the holiday service schedule for this and next month:

- **Sunday services in December will be held Dec. 4 (monthly memorial), Dec. 11 (Bodhi Day), and Dec. 18 (regular)**
- **There is no service on Dec. 25 (Christmas)**
- **Joya-no-Kane, the year-end bell-ringing ceremony, at the Nikka Yuko Garden will be held, weather permitting, Dec. 31, beginning at 11:30 p.m.**
- **A New Year's service on Jan. 1, 2012, at 10:30, will be held at the temple on the first Sunday in January, but not the monthly memorial service.**
- **Shotsuki for January is scheduled for Jan. 15, the third Sunday, and in conjunction with the Ho-onko service at 2 p.m.**
- **A regular Sunday service will be held on Jan. 8, the second Sunday.**

Although BTSA seems to wind down somewhat during the last month of the year, it still has scheduled an introduction to Jodo Shinshu on Dec. 7 at 7 p.m., the second in the study sessions inaugurated in October, and a movie night on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. with the feature film, "Groundhog Day." Please see notes on both elsewhere in this Hikari.

Temple members were busy in November making mein noodles, baked goods, and Japanese pastries and sushi for the third annual bake and craft sale on Nov. 26, rebranded as the Dana Bake and Craft Sale to reflect the decision to donate half the proceeds to three charities: the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen, Harbour House and Habitat for Humanity. Thanks to Brenda Oishi for overseeing the event and to all those who worked many hours preparing for it, truly dana in action so central to Jodo Shinshu.

As promised in the November Hikari, an article on the Alberta Buddhist Conference of Oct. 28 thru 30 may be found elsewhere in this issue.

It also was reported in the same Hikari that donations for the JSBTC Dana Day amounted to \$965. At the November board meeting, John Dubbelboer reported that a subsequent donation made it an even \$1,000, and a cheque in that amount subsequently was forwarded to JSBTC headquarters in Steveston.

Here's hoping all BTSA members spend a relaxing and comfortable holiday season, reminiscing about the past year and looking forward to the next.

Akira Ichikawa

CHAIR SCHEDULE Dec 2011 & January 2012

Dec 04 SHOTUSKI

Chair: Reiko Takeyasu
Audio: Tak Okamura

Dec 11

Chair: Jack Nagai
Audio: Roland Ikuta

Dec 18

Chair: Florence Senda
Audio: Robert Takaguchi

Dec 25 NO SERVICE

Dec 31 JOYA-NO-KANE

Nikka Yuko Gardens
11:30 pm

Jan 01 NEW YEAR'S SERVICE

BTSA, 10:30 am

Jan 08

Chair: Robert Takaguchi
Audio: Brenda Ikuta

Jan 15 HO-ONKO, BTSA, 2 pm

Chair: Roland Ikuta
Audio: Roy Sassa

Jan 22

Chair: Joyce Shigehiro
Audio: Tak Okamura

Jan 29

Chair: Sway Nishimura
Audio: John Dubbelboer

MC designates: if you're unable to chair on your assigned date or have made other arrangements on your own, please inform Sway Nishimura, religious chairman. Thank you.



DANA Bake & Craft Sale in November: a busy entrance at the BTSA

SECURE OUTSIDE DOORS

All members and users, please insure that the temple exterior doors are firmly secured before leaving. We've had several recent episodes where exterior doors of the temple have not been closed tightly, leaving them easy to open from the outside. This is especially true of the north set of doors. We have since had those doors adjusted, but be sure to tug on them once you're outside to insure they are locked.

Fortunately, we haven't had any breach of security but we may not always be so lucky. If you're the last to leave the temple, please double-check ALL exterior doors to insure they are locked and closed.

A Successful DANA Bake & Craft Sale THANK YOU!



TOBAN UPDATE

Toban Schedule

Please help out anytime you are available but especially during your Toban month.

December: Toban 2 January: Toban 4
February: Toban 1 March: Toban 2

Toban 3 is skipped the first month of this coming new year. One toban is skipped each January to assure that we have different monthly assignments each year.

Thanks to **Toban 1** for all their tasks during the month of November. Special appreciation to Lilly for coordinating the manju and sushi-making for the bake sale and all Toban members for helping.

Thanks to Pat Sassa and Jan Okamura for, once again coordinating the mein-making in November. As usual, mein-noodles were a sell-out at the bake sale.

Thanks to Brenda Ikuta and the Bake Sale Committee, the volunteers who assisted and donated baking and crafts to the Bake Sale.

SOUP KITCHEN

Toban leaders (or their designates) will coordinate four Soup Kitchen dates in the new year. It's not too soon to let the coordinator of the date you wish to participate know you are available. Next up is Toban 2 (Sumie Tsukishima) on January 24.



BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

470 - 40th Street South, Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5 | 403.327.1260 | www.thebtsa.com

2011 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.: _____

Cellphone No.: _____

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

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!

Shotsuki Hoyo

November 2011

- Richard & Val Boras
- Jim & Atsuko Hagihara
- Chiduka Hamabata
- Keiko Higa
- Shinako (Sheila) Higa
- Shirley Higa
- Janet Hinatsu
- Marie Y Hirashima
- Molly Ito
- Tom & Lily Kaga
- Dave Kunimoto
- Katoye Maruno
- Kay K. Matsuda
- Mr & Mrs Mark Murakami
- Shig & Katie Nakagawa
- May Nishikawa
- Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
- May Ohno
- Heidi Oishi
- Lilly Oishi*
- Tak & Jan Okamura
- Roy & Pat Sassa
- Ken & Nancy Setoguchi
- Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
- Tom Shimozawa
- Fumi Sugimoto
- Harry Sugimoto
- Noboru & Kazuko Sugimoto
- Tomiko Sugimoto
- Miyo Sunada
- Robert & Judy Takaguchi
- Fugi Takeda
- Bill & June Terakita
- George Tokuda
- Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita
- Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
- Keith & Kathleen Turnbull

Total \$1,335

*Lilly Oishi's name was omitted from the October list

Other Donations

November 2011

- Etheline Blind
- Choju Kai
- Chiduka Hamabata
- Jim Hironaka
- Tucker Hironaka
- Tomii Hisaoka
- Chris & Susan Huntley
- Rumiko Ibuki
- Akira & Lorita Ichikawa
- Michie Kawasaki
- Leslie Kelner
- Akira & Misae Masuda
- Hideko Nishi
- Rocky & Jean Oishi
- Tak & Jan Okamura
- Barrie & Jackie-Lynn Robb
- Florence Senda
- Yoshiye Shirakawa Family
- Robert & Judy Takaguchi
- Toshiko Takeda
- Masaye Tanaka
- Jim Tsukishima
- Lloyd Tsukishima

Total \$5,090

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. Also, anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print, please let us know so it won't be published. Thank you.

2011 Buddhist Memorial Service

仏教徒の年忌法要

Year of Death (死亡年)

- 2010 First annual memorial 1 year from death
- 2009 3rd 2 full years from death
- 2005 7th 6 full years from death
- 1999 13th 12 full years from death
- 1995 17th 16 full years from death
- 1987 25th 24 full years from death
- 1979 33rd 32 full years from death
- 1962 50th 49 full years from death

A memorial rite marking the death of the deceased not only calls for the adornment of the shrine and the reading of the sutra but also is a precious occasion for recalling the cherished memories of the beloved and the most of all to realize the blessings of the Light of Wisdom and Life of Compassion which embrace us all. (from Jodo Shinshu Handbook for laymen)

On the first or near the first Sunday of every month, the BTSA observes a monthly memorial service in memory of those people whose date of death (meinichi-命日) falls in that month. Please bring a Homyo of your loved one.

REGULAR EVENTS

Dharma Study

10 - 10:20 am Sundays

(except first Sunday of the month, please note calendar)

Contact: Rev. Izumi at 403.382.7024

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir

Thursdays 7 - 8:30 pm through December 8

Regular practice begins January 5

Contact: Katie at 403.327.4296 or katiinak@shaw.ca

Tonari Gumi

Tuesdays 12 - 3 pm through December 20

Return on Jan 10

Taiko Class

Tuesdays 7 - 8:30 pm • Youth 6:30 - 7pm

Return on Jan 10

Contact: David Tanaka at 403.330.1548 or david@eyesquared.com

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club

Begins October 12

Wednesdays 1:30 - 4 pm

No karaoke Dec 21 & 28

All interested are welcome to join or just listen and enjoy.

Flowers or fruit basket will be delivered to those in hospital. If you know of someone who is in hospital for at least one week please contact Sumi & Joe Tomiyama at 403.327.3110 or sumi.tomiyama@gmail.com.

PROGRAMS

Gentle Yoga for Seniors with Val Kunimoto

Winter session dates are February 2 - March 22. We will hold a few spaces for men.

Aiki Breathing Class with Lincoln Chew

Extended through December 12.

For further information on **Toban, Special Events or Programs,**

Contact: Lorita at 403 327 1668 or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

O-Nenju (O-Juzu) new arrival from Japan!

An excellent gift for your friends, children and grandchildren!

Let's expand the circle of O-Nembutsu!

BUDDHIST Q & A

What is O-Nenju or O-Juzu

(お念珠、お数珠)?

"O" is a Japanese honorific prefix to show our respect. Nenju literally means "thought-beads" and Juzu "counting beads". Whichever you call it o-nenju or o-juzu is a tool to show our respect and gratitude to the Buddha. When we carry it, let's consider that the beads symbolize human selfish desires and the string symbolizes Buddha's compassion. Buddha's compassion is always working within our selfish hearts and minds. The tool is a reminder of our life and Buddha's life of boundless compassion. (Y. I.)

MOVIE NIGHT at the Temple

Friday, December 9th, 2011 at 7 PM

GROUNDHOG DAY

starring Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell

Bill Murray is at his wry, wisecracking best in this riotous romantic comedy about a weatherman caught in a personal time warp on the worst day of his life. Teamed with a relentless cheerful producer and a smart-aleck cameraman he is sent to cover the annual groundhog day festivities. But on his way out of town he is caught in a giant blizzard and finds himself stuck in small-town hell. Just when things couldn't get worse, they do. Phil wakes the next morning to find it's Groundhog day all over again... and again and again.

This film has been argued to have deep spiritual meaning with strong Buddhistic themes. Is this really true? Can you find the Buddhist content of this comedy??

Introduction to Buddhism class #2

The next introduction to Buddhism class will be held on December 7th 2011. This will be held in the boardroom of the temple at 7 PM on the first Wednesday of December. The first session which was held on Oct. 5th had 12 people attend. The initial session involved a brief introduction to general Buddhism. The next session will explore Jodo Shinshu Sect of Buddhism. This is the sect of Buddhism that is followed at the BTSA. We will try to hand out brief reading materials prior to the session. If you are interested in attending please contact Roland Ikuta at 403-317-0078 or email him at rolikuta@shaw.ca.

The 33rd Annual ABC: “Pay It Forward”



Gratitude with a capital “G” means paying it forward. Don Castro sensei told the annual Alberta Buddhist Conference which met Oct. 28 through 30 at the BTSA.

Castro sensei, the head resident minister (rinban) of the Seattle

Betusin Buddhist Temple, said extending our sense of indebtedness arising from all things we’ve received describes Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and is to be contrasted with the little “g” notion of gratitude which is self-centered, ending with such utterances as “I’m grateful for the clothes I received” with no further action.

As noted in the description of his talk, “when children are asked what they are grateful for, they generally make a list of things that are pleasing to them.” With the introduction of non-self into the equation, he said those who are truly grateful beyond themselves tend to give back in some way to others.

The 33rd annual conference drew more than 100 persons who took part in the three-day examination of the theme, “Pay It Forward: Dana in Daily Life.” Besides two other talks from Castro sensei, a talk entitled “I Owe, I Owe, It’s Off to Work I Go” was given by James Martin sensei of the Calgary Buddhist Temple.

Examples of giving and paying it forward were provided by Dharma School children who put together a brief show on the theme of “mottainai”, Margaret Benson who shared her experience as an English teacher in a Thai Buddhist monastery earlier in 2011, Charlotte Ikuta and Lisa Sakamoto who thanked BTSA and JSBTC by way of a report of the Japan Youth Tour they were on during the summer, and a session led by the BTSA choir who led the audience in singing “Mottainai”, “Sing” and a new English translation of “Shinshu Shuka” (Shinku Anthem).

Castro sensei also spoke about his personal journey into Jodo Shinshu, beginning with reflections of his application for conscientious objector status during the Vietnam War and his eye-opening experiences as a night janitor at a hospital while attending school.

Martin sensei provided a primer on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism by showing Shinran’s indebtedness to generations of teachers who followed the historic Buddha.

The conference included a last-minute performance by young taiko players, led by David Tanaka, and a screening of a film more than 40 years old, “Katei Seikatsu”, depicting Japanese-Canadian life in southern Alberta. The focus was on the family of Mas Sunada, who died earlier this year. Sheila Oishi did a great job as day chairperson and Deanna Jones kept things lively as the banquet MC.

Thanks to the planning committee of Robert and Judy Takaguchi, Sway and Totsy Nishimura, Pat and Roy Sassa, John Harding, John and Donna Dubbelboer, Izumi sensei, and Akira Ichikawa. Thanks, too, to Maya Ichikawa who organized the Dharma School presentation and the program for the children.

Additional words of appreciation to all those who registered, and to temple members who helped set up and clean up, assisted the caterers, and looked after the naijin.

For those who are interested, a summary of the evaluation sheets that were submitted is available on the temple bulletin board. Forty persons responded, and the evaluation was largely favorable.

Next year’s ABC will be hosted by the Calgary Buddhist Temple.

JSBTC WF raffle at ABC

A total of \$625.05 was raised in a raffle for the Women’s Federation of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada during the Alberta Buddhist Conference in October. The proceed will go toward the WF’s sponsorship of the 2015 World Buddhist Women’s Convention in Calgary in 2015.

Andrew Ichikawa held the winning ticket for the first prize, an LG microwave oven donated by Glen Tanaka of Fairfield Appliances. Second prize went to Nancy Adachi who received a \$25 gift certificate to the Regent Restaurant, a bottle of wine and a package of green tea. Third prize winner Lorita Ichikawa received a \$25 gift certificate to the Regent Restaurant and a bird feeder. All the latter prizes were donated by Wayne Kwan of the Regent.

Donna Dubbelboer, WF representative, extended her thanks to all who bought tickets and to Glen and Wayne for their generosity.



DHARMA CLASS RAISES \$247 for Charity



The kids had fun packaging and selling goodies in the month of November. Thank you to Sheila Oishi and the parents and grandparents who helped the class package Dharma chips, and Lorita Ichikawa for overseeing the kids' table at the bake sale.



UPCOMING EVENT Sunday, December 18 Superstore at 10:30 am

The Dharma class will go shopping with the money they made at the bake sale. They will be donating food items and Christmas presents for other boys and girls to the Interfaith Food Bank. Please meet at Superstore On Dec. 18 at 10:30am by the tables and chairs at the North entrance. Lists will be ready and we can separate into groups. This was a lot of fun last year!



Food Donation Box

BTSA is soliciting food donations for the Lethbridge Food Bank through January, as it did last year. A donation box is in the multipurpose room and your generosity is appreciated to help those less fortunate than us through the holiday season and after. At the end of January, we'll estimate the cash value of the collected goods and match it with a cheque to the Lethbridge Food Bank. A partial wish list follows here, but please see the attachment on the donation box for the complete items sought: cereal, oatmeal, canned meals, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned meat, peanut butter, beans, macaroni and cheese, past and pasta sauces, and canned or powered soups. Cash donations also are welcomed.

December 2011 & January 2012 Schedule

Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要 Please bring Homyo (Buddhist Name) of your loved one. 法名をご持参ください。
Sunday, January 1, 10:30am • Shusho-E Service

DECEMBER: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				7pm SAB Choir		
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service 4	11am Aiki Breathing class 5	12 noon Tonari Gumi 6	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm Introduction to Jodo Shinshu 7	7pm SAB Choir 8	7pm Movie Night at the Temple "Groundhog Day" 9	3
10 - 10:15am Dharma Study 10:30am Bodhi Day Service 11	11am Aiki Breathing class 12	12 noon Tonari Gumi 13	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA board meeting 14	15	16	17
10 - 10:15am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 18	19	12 noon Tonari Gumi 20	21	22	23	24
No Service Hikari Deadline 25	26	27	28	29	30	11:30pm Joya-no- Kane (Year End Bell Ringing) at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden 31

JANUARY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10:30am Shusho-E Service 1	2	3	1:30pm Karaoke 4	7pm SAB Choir 5	6	7
10 - 10:15am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 8	9	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 10	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA board meeting 11	7pm SAB Choir 12	13	14
2pm Hoonko (Shinran Shonin's Memorial Service) 15	16	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 17	1:30pm Karaoke 18	7pm SAB Choir 19	20	21
10 - 10:15am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 22	23	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 24	1:30pm Karaoke 25	7pm SAB Choir 26	Hikari deadline 27	28
10 - 10:15am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 29	30	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 30	1:30pm Karaoke 30			