



December 2012

A letter from my friend

Recently I received a letter from an elderly lady from a previous assignment. I remember she and her husband were devout Buddhists. Let me briefly introduce her letter first. She wrote: *I am writing to you, as I am faced with some troublesome and sad news about my dear friend, whose husband is in the hospital, with stomach cancer, about to undergo harsh chemotherapy.*

Writing some details about their life in Canada, she continued, "My friend e-mailed me the other day and told me that she was in a constant state of despair, and seeking desperate help. I told her about Amida Buddha's compassion. But she said 'If there is Amida Buddha, why would Amida Buddha abandon us and put us through this pain and suffering. I would like to know why. I don't believe in religion like you. My husband and I are in a living hell every day. We are walking in a dark tunnel that has no end. I shouldn't show my crying face to my husband. I cry alone every day.'"

Well, my friend asked me to offer some comforting piece of encouraging words to her as to Amida Buddha's boundless compassion and relieve some of her feelings of despair.

The day I received the letter I thought about her friend who is desperately looking after her husband. Apparently, right now, she seems to have no ear to listen to the advice of my friend. I thought how I should quickly respond. Next day I wrote two short letters; one for my friend and the other is for the lady who is in pain and suffering. It was my wish that the lady whom I never met would, at least, read my letter.

When we are in a critical situation like this lady, we will wonder "Why me?", "Why my husband?", "We didn't do anything wrong." "Why does Buddha not help us?" Thus, avoiding seeing the situation directly, we try to push it aside, a kind of "run away" from the present situation, present suffering and pain. But we know the more we try to avoid the situation and run away from it, the more we suffer. Running away is not a solution.

If it is so, why don't we see the present situation straight, the reality of our suffering, pain and confused mind, face to face with courage. It would be very difficult but why don't we try to learn something from the present situation? I think no one wants to get sick. No one wants to die. No one wants to see our loved one suffering. But wait. We all, you and me, get sick and die sooner or later. Furthermore, from Buddha's eyes of wisdom, it is happening every day because our life is impermanent. But we cannot see this. We don't want to think about it. So we ask "Why me?" But why not me? We are in the world of impermanence. There is no exception. It is not extraordinary that we get sick and die, anytime.

We are bound by self-attachment and self-love. Self-attachment and self-love are nothing but blind passions of greed. Blind passions of greed are so deep that we are unable to accept our life, the life of changing as it is. We cling to "self" and "I" and are unable to let them go. It is natural for ordinary people whose wisdom eye is closed due to blind passions of greed.

Shinran Shonin says:
The light of Amida's compassion is without compare. When a person encounters this light, All bonds of negative thoughts fall away; So take refuge in Amida, the ultimate shelter.

In the midst of our fundamental suffering of death, dying and separation from our loved one, we hear Amida's Vow in which we have been embraced. Whether we are religious or not, the Buddha of boundless compassion never abandons us but cries with us because it is the nature of the Buddha. The ultimate shelter symbolized as Amida Buddha awakens us to the preciousness of each moment of our life. In deep gratitude we respond to the Buddha saying *Namo Amida Butsu.*

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

「本堂」

私たちは、本堂に入る前、まず頭を下げます。そして出るときにも、頭を下げます。時々忘れてしまうこともあります。入り口の両脇に立っている金色の柱が、私たちに注意を促してくれます。というのも、金色の二本の柱は、煩惱の林に入っていくということを教え、その林の中で法に会うということだからです。煩惱とは「むさぼり」と「怒り」と「おろかさ」の三毒のことです。そのような煩惱にまみれた、私たちの生活の真只中に、み仏は働いて下さっているのです。坐っていることが出来ず、ここまで来て下さるのです。それが、立ち姿の仏様となっております。そのお姿に、私たちは仏様の智慧と慈悲のお心を頂き、自分の心を見つめさせていただきます。そうです。本堂は、仏様と私との出遇いの場所なのです。本堂という場所は「儲かった、損した、泣いた、笑った」の生活に明け暮れている私たちが、今日もみ仏に、心配され、抱かれていたということを知られ、静かな安らぎと喜びを頂く場所なのです。いよいよ聴聞させていただきます。合掌 泉

BTSA NOTES

The month at the temple began with the fourth annual Bake and Craft Sale, too early to report the proceeds from the event in this Hikari. They will be ready for the next issue.

As the year end approaches, please remember the holiday schedule for temple services. They are as follows:

- December Sunday services:
 - Dec. 2 – English Monthly Memorial, 10:30 a.m.; Japanese, 2 p.m.
 - Dec. 9 - Bodhi Day, 10:30 a.m.
 - Dec. 16 – Regular service, 10:30 a.m.
- There is no service on Dec. 23 (just before Christmas) or Dec. 30.
- 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 this will not be the monthly memorial service.
- Shotsuki for January is scheduled for Jan. 20, the third Sunday, and in conjunction with the Ho-onko service at 2 p.m., followed by the New Year's Party.
- A regular Sunday service will be held on Jan. 6, the first Sunday, and Jan. 13, the second Sunday.

A major snowfall played havoc with plans to travel to Calgary for the Alberta Buddhist Conference on Nov. 10. The proposed transportation bus was cancelled and more than 25 members who were planning to attend did not make the trip. The BTSA board, at its Nov. 14 meeting, decided to make a donation of \$700 to the Calgary Buddhist Temple to help defray expenses it planned to offset with a \$25 per person registration fee.

Mentioning snow, the first heavy snowfall of the season had turned the parking lot into a skating pond. We learned afterwards that the person who removed the snow last year decided to quit the business. The board, however, has approved an agreement with a new contractor—Jamie Meeks of Sure Root Vegetation, Inc., of Raymond—just in time to have the lot cleared with the pre-ABC snowfall in mid-November.

As reported in last month's Hikari, the purchase of a second dough mixer was completed in time for the mein-making session on Nov. 2. Cost of the mixer was \$2,520 (GST included).

Just a couple of reminders. Please consider donating food products to our annual drive, this year for the Lethbridge Interfaith Food Bank, and donations for the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Dana Day. The latter will be totaled this month and will be forwarded to JSBTC Headquarters for propagation purposes. Members' attention to these matters are deeply appreciated.

Finally, on occasion, I come across encouraging words from our Canadian sister temples. If you've a chance, check out articles in the October issue of Guiding Light, the Toronto Buddhist Temple newsletter, by Jeff Wilson and Larry Wakisaka. Both display the spirit of "pay it forward" which was the ABC theme in 2011. Scroll down to the articles at [http://www.tbc.on.ca/images/uploads/2012_October_GL_\(web\).pdf](http://www.tbc.on.ca/images/uploads/2012_October_GL_(web).pdf)

Akira Ichikawa

CHAIR SCHEDULE

Dec 2012

Dec 02 SHOTSUKI

Chair: Robert Takaguchi
Audio: John Dubbelboer

Dec 09

Chair: Pat Sassa
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Dec 16

Chair: Kate Ainscough
Audio: Sway Nishimura

Dec 23

NO SERVICE

Dec 30

NO SERVICE

Dec 31

New Year's Eve Service
Joya-No-Kane: Nikka Yuko
Gardens

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

BUDDHIST Q & A

Who are depicted on the scroll in the far left side of the shrine?

The scroll depicts Seven Masters whom Shinran Shonin highly respected. They are important masters who had contributed to the transmission of the Pure Land teaching from India to Japan. Seven Masters are Nagarjuna (ca. 150-250) in India, Vasubandhu (ca. 400-480) in India, T'an-Luan (476-542) in China, Tao-ch'o (562-645) in China, Shan-tao (613-682) in China, Genshin (942-1017) in Japan and Honen (1133-1212) in Japan. (Y.I.)



Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada **WOMEN'S FEDERATION**

Newsletter Update from the JSBTCWF
Dated: November 19, 2012

Good Day,

As the holiday season is fast approaching and another year will be coming to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all the Temples for their generous support of the Women's Federation in 2012.

A lot of time and effort is going on regarding the hosting of the 15th World Buddhist Women's Convention (WBWC) on May 30 & 31, 2015 in Calgary and there's more work ahead of us. Already, over 150 people in Canada have expressed interest in attending the convention which is heartwarming to hear at such an early stage! Let's keep the momentum going!

Calgary is set to host the 2013 World Buddhist Women's Representative Assembly meeting on June 1 & 2/13. Plans are falling into place and it's been quite a learning experience.

At the end of this year, the Shop & Support gift card fundraiser for the 2015 convention will be over. The WF wish to extend appreciation for everyone's kind efforts to buy, sell, and support the sale of the gift cards as this truly brought us together from coast to coast.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind Temples that the WF continues to have two types of funding programs available as well as application forms for:

- Youth Dharma School Assistance which is for the education of our youth in activities keeping with the spirit of expanding the Buddhist Fellowship. Please refer to the qualifications and application form for more details (available via your WF rep).
- WF Sustaining Fund is used to assist our Temple minister's education or training. We encourage the ministers to apply for funding for Ministerial approved learning.

It has been a busy year for the WF and we continue to grow and learn. There are challenges ahead of us and we are truly thankful for your ongoing guidance and support.

In gassho,
Susan Huntley
President, JSBTCWF



2015 • WORLD
BUDDHIST
WOMEN'S
CONVENTION

The 15th World Buddhist Women's Convention will be held in Calgary, AB
May 30 & 31, 2015
Please plan on joining the Canadian Sangha and be
"Embraced by the Oneness of Life"

TOBAN UPDATE

Thanks to **Toban 2** for tea and all the caretaking activities in the month of November. Contacts for Toban 2 are Robert and Judy Takaguchi.

Soup Kitchen: Members and friends of **Toban 3** prepared lunch on October 24th. Thanks to Hisae Price, Eileen Samishima, Marge Fujita, Tosh Ibuki, Joe and Sumi Tomiiyama, Marian Tomiyama, Emily Stitt, and Shirley Higa. The regular Soup Kitchen schedule begins again in the new year.



Toban 2 going about cleaning toilets with a positive attitude!



THE NEW DOUGH MIXER had its inauguration Nov. 1, to prepare dough for chow mein noodles which were made the following day. Tak Okamura and Tosh Ibuki check out the new machine before beginning the dough-making process. The mixer is almost identical to the one donated by the old Coaldale temple and will help standardize dough-mixing.

2012 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!



NOVEMBER SHOTSUKI. More than a 100 members and friends gathered at the temple for the November monthly memorial service on Nov. 4, a cold but sunny day.

Shotsuki Hoyo Donations

November 2012
Richard & Valerie Boras
Jim & Atsuko Hagihara
Chiduka Hamabata
Nadine Hamabata
Shinako (Sheila) Higa
Shirley N Higa
Janet Hinatsu
Marie Hirashima
Sadae Kanegawa
Dave & Valerie Kunimoto
Eileen Kunimoto
Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno
Joyce Miyashita
Shig & Katie K Nakagawa
May Nishikawa
Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
May Ohno
Takeshi & Jan Okamura
Roy & Pat Sassa
Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
Fumi Sugimoto
Noboru & Kazuko Sugimoto
Tomiko Sugimoto
Miyo Sunada
Kazuko Takaguchi
Robert & Judy Takaguchi
Fugi Takeda
Bill & June Terakita
George Tokuda
Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita
Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama

Total - \$1,020

Other Donations

November 2012
Hironaka Employee
Benefits Inc
Rumi Ibuki
Dr. Roland & Brenda Ikuta
Waye & Rhonda Kwan
Mitsuko Oga
Florence Senda
Masaye Tanaka
Bill Teshima
Carmen Tillman

Total - \$4,195

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

Dharma sessions in Japanese will be held the first Sunday of the month at 2 pm led by Rev. Izumi.

Tonari Gumi

Tuesdays 12 - 3 pm

Membership open to all over age 55.

Taiko Class

Tuesdays 6:30 youth, 7 - 8:30 pm adults

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

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club

Wednesdays 1:30 - 4 pm

Jodo Shinshu Adult Dharma classes

Contact: Rev. Izumi

PROGRAMS

Contact: Lorita Ichikawa 403.327.1668 or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com

Flowers, fruit basket or a restaurant certificate 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's Federation World Convention Craft Group will take a break in December and commence meetings again in the new year.

Contact: Totsy Nishimura 403.752.3435 or swayn@telusplanet.net

JSBTC WF Shop and Support Program

BTSA made \$1,440 this year from the sale of gift cards. Since the program started over 3 years ago, we have made a total of \$4,468.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Girls' Odori meets Sundays at 1:45 with Joanne Terakita, teacher and

Pat Sassa, coordinator.

CURRY SUPPER/MOVIE NIGHT drew more than 50 persons for the supper and an additional 10 or so for the movie on Nov. 3. Following an enjoyable meal prepared by temple volunteers, led by Roland Ikuta, a poignant DVD of "The Cats of Mirikitani" was screened in the hondo. The DVD is available in the temple board room library for any member wishing to view it.

photos: John Dubbelboer



Upcoming MOVIE NIGHT at the Temple



Friday, January 25, 2013 • 7pm

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

One of the 2011 academy award nominees

starring Tom Hanks and Sandra Bullock

The movie will start at 7 PM and there will be snacks after the movie.

Adapted from the acclaimed bestseller by Jonathan Safran Foer. *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* is a story that unfolds from inside the mind of Oskar Schell, an inventive eleven year old New Yorker whose discovery of a key in the belongings of his father, who died in the World Trade Center on 9/11. This sets him off on an urgent search for the lock it opens. As Oskar's quest takes him across the city, he encounters an eclectic assortment of people- survivors in their own way- who help uncover links to his father, preserving a connection to the man who helped Oskar confront his fears about the noisy, dangerous world around him.

"A Stunning, Powerful and Beautiful film"

"The best movie of the year. Funny, moving and soulful"

MEIN-MAKING November 2

Cutting the dough.



Running the dough through three presses.



This is a photo of the second press.



The dough is sent to noodle cutters.



The first of the noodles.



The noodles are deep-fried.



They're set out to cool...



then, packed in plastic bags and weighed

Lunch preparation for the workers.

photos: John Dubbelboer,
Akira Ichikawa





Shopping Trip for the food bank

Sunday, December 9

Class will meet at regular service time **10:30am** at **Superstore** to pick up items to donate to the Interfaith food bank which supplies families with necessities. Please meet at the North entrance by the tables.



We Create Change

We Create Change is a fundraising project under the umbrella of FREE THE CHILDREN, which collects pennies to provide clean water for children in need.

This year, in recognition of the global water crisis and the effect that events like last year's East African drought have on developing countries, Free The Children has set a goal of providing 100,000 people with clean water for life.

Please consider joining the cause and bringing your pennies to temple. A jar has been set-up in the multipurpose room. Remember, the penny will soon be out of circulation - what a great way to get rid of them!



The kids package and weigh Dharma chips which are sold at the annual bake sale.



Schedule 光 December 2012 & January 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。

DECEMBER: TOBAN 3

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10:30am Shotsuki (in English) 2pm 日本語法座 2		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 3	1:30pm Karaoke 5	5:30pm Meditation 7pm SAB Choir 6		1 1-3pm Bake Sale 8
10:30am Bodhi Day Service 9		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 10	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 11		7pm Adult Dharma Study/Introduction to Buddhism 13	14
10:30am Regular Service 16		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 17	1:30pm Karaoke 18			19
No Service 23						20
						21
No Service 30	11:30pm 9th annual Joya- no-Kane (New Year's Eve Bell Ringing ceremony) at Nikka Yuko Garden 31					22
						23
						24
						25
						26
						27
						28
						29

JANUARY: TOBAN 1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		New Year's Day Service 1				2
						3
10:30am Regular Service 6		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 7	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTSA Board Meeting 8		7pm Adult Dharma Study/Introduction to Jodo Shinshu (Shin Buddhism) 10	11
10:30am Regular Service 13		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 14	1:30pm Karaoke 15			16
						17
2pm Hoonko/Shotsuki/ New Year's Party 20		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 21	1:30pm Karaoke 22		7pm Movie Night at the Temple 24	25
10:30am Regular Service 27		12pm Tonari Gumi 6:30pm Youth Taiko 7pm Adult Taiko 28	1:30pm Karaoke 29			30
						31
						12
						19
						26