



November 2011

PAY IT FORWARD



Recently, we had our Annual Fall Chow Mein Supper. Everyone, young and old, worked very hard. Of course, it was not a one-day job. Many hours of laboring were involved for at least a few days.

The Chow Mein Supper is one of our fund raisers. We have many activities at our temple so we need to try and raise funds to underwrite them. It was a successful event, so, we were able to make money.

However, making money is not our real purpose. I talked to one elderly gentleman who was working hard as usual. He said “I am very grateful to be here with many friends. My health is still fine. I am allowed to work together with others.” And then he said “this is my way of Hoon Kansha.” He used a rather technical term of Jodo Shinshu. Hoon means to repay our indebtedness. Kansha is an expression of gratitude.

He was saying that what he was doing was the expression of gratitude. For him, working generally, whether paid or volunteering, is not a means to something else. Through his work he was repaying

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his indebtedness of gratitude to the Dharma, to Amida Buddha which has been given to him.

We are given much and receive many things every day. And yet we often do not appreciate much. Rather, we complain and grumble. But through listening to the Dharma and encountering Amida’s compassion, we come to know that we are not able to live even one single day without the help of others, both people and things. We realize that we are here because of countless supports and cares, visible and invisible. So our working is the expression of gratitude. That was what the gentleman meant.

Is this not a spirit of “Pay it Forward” from a Buddhist point of view? We do not pay it forward expecting some kind of reward or return.

We have already been given much. So repaying our indebtedness is a natural consequence. Kansha or gratitude is a natural way for those who can see the interconnectedness or interrelationship of life in the light of Amida. I think this is the essence of Jodo Shinshu teaching.

Jodo Shinshu followers find gratitude and peace of mind in our everyday lives, in our happy days and sad days. In the light of Amida, in the working of Amida, we do not need to engage in some kind of religious practice separate from our secular life. People often think that religious life is something which is separate from everyday secular life.

For Jodo Shinshu followers, however, the secular life or everyday life itself is the place to practice to repay our gratitude.

During October we observed JSBTC Day, because it was the month when the first Jodo Shinshu minister arrived in Canada and started to disseminate Jodo Shinshu teaching.

Jodo Shinshu always talks about “Nembutsu”. The Nembutsu, unlike the understanding of many people—including even Jodo Shinshu followers—is not a religious practice to attain enlightenment. It is not a means to attain Buddha’s world. There is no such idea in Jodo Shinshu that the more one recites the nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu, the faster one reaches enlightenment. This kind of understanding of the Nembutsu was strongly rejected by Shinran Shonin as selfish and calculative motivation or jiriki no kokoro. Shinran Shonin says that the Nembutsu is Amida Buddha’s call. It is Amida’s working for us. Amida Buddha is working for those who have no eyes of wisdom to see the interdependency and interconnectedness of life and thereby create a life without sincere gratitude.

The Nembutsu is the working of Amida who tries to awaken such beings. The recitation of Namo Amida Butsu is our response in gratitude to Amida. The recitation is not a cause of something but a result through or in which we are able to appreciate and be grateful for countless things around us.

Let us rededicate ourselves to listen to and appreciate the working of Amida Buddha and recite Namo Amida Butsu in deep gratitude and joy while we are working in our everyday lives.

In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Minister of BTSA

いよいよ寒くなってきました。お寺に足を運ぶのも大変です。

お寺参りも、出来たらよい天気にしたことはありません。しかし、「明日の命もわかりません」となると、天気のよし悪しは問題ではなくなるでしょう。

先日運転しておりましたら、前の車のバンパーに「10人のうち10人は死ぬ」と書かれたステッカーがありました。これは確かなことです。仏教ではこの確かさに加えて「入る息、出るを待たず」と言って無常迅速を説きます。つまり、明日の命もわからない、ということなのです。だから、仏教では「法を聞けよ、聴聞せよ」と勧めています。しかし、最近、明日の命もわからないから、自分の好きなように、楽しく「今」を生きましよう、と仏教の道とは方向違いの考えになっているようです。

人間の一生を箱にたとえれば、縦は寿命と健康、横は財産、名誉あるいは地位、といえましょうか。なるべく健康で長生き、そこにお金と社会的な名誉、地位があったらもっといい、ということです。ところが、箱には「深さ」があります。人間の一生に深さを与えてくださるものが仏法であり、仏様の心でありましよう。それは、自分だけの幸せから、他と共に幸せになっていく道を示すものです。他の幸せ、喜びが、自らの幸せ、喜びとなっていく道なのです。仏法に耳を傾け、仏様の心をわが身に受けながら、いよいよ日々の生活にいそしみましよう。合掌 泉

BTSA NOTES

A busy November follows an equally busy October, as we plan for a mein-noodle making session on Nov. 12, preparatory to a bake sale later in the month. A maximum of five (5) bags to each interested member also is available. Please register in the sign-up booklet at the temple. If you can't make it in person, please call either Jan Okamura (327-0406) or Pat Sassa (329-3015) to be added to the list.

BTSA will be holding the Dana Day Bake sale on Nov. 26 (Saturday) with a special objective this year. At its October board meeting, it was decided that half the proceeds of the Fall Bake Sale be put aside for equal contributions to the Soup Kitchen, Harbor House and Habitat for Humanity.

Recapping October activities, an introduction to Buddhism course was inaugurated; the annual fall chow mein supper was held; a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Day was observed; guest speaker Dr. Jeff Wilson gave a pithy description of Jodo Shinshu at a public lecture on Oct. 21; and the Alberta Buddhist Conference, details of which will be in the December Hikari, was held Oct. 28 through 30.

Many thanks to all the hard-working volunteers who labored three days to prepare for and execute the annual fall chow mein supper on Oct. 15. We appreciate the time and effort put into this major fund-raiser and hope that those who participated enjoyed the time we spent together. (See a related item elsewhere.)

Thanks, too, for the donations on JSBTC Day which will be forwarded to the Steveston main office for propagation purposes.

The BTSA board at its October meeting agreed to offer Sunday transportation service for six months (once each month) to members in Taber and Coaldale by the Lethbridge Concierge Service. A trial run on Oct. 3 (Shotsuki) at a cost of \$262 attracted seven members.

The board also:

- was informed that a cheque was sent to the Canadian Red Cross for \$903.90, the balance collected for the Japan Disaster Relief Fund after the first donation of \$32,461.73 was remitted in May, 2011.
- voted to send a \$100 honorarium to the Kamloops Buddhist Temple on the occasion of its 65th anniversary;
- agreed to July 14, 2012 as the date of the next bon odori;
- decided to set up a food collection box with items to be donated to the Lethbridge Food Bank with a cheque to match the estimated value of the donations; and,
- set Nov. 26 as the date for the bake sale with the conditions as noted above.

The board would like members to consider being nominated for the board in advance of elections at the annual general meeting in March 2012. Please inform any current board member of your interest.

Akira Ichikawa

Annual Fall Chow Mein Supper • Oct 15

Co-chairpersons Jan Okamura and Pat Sassa reported a profit of \$15,751.08 from the fall chow mein supper. Jan added her appreciation: "Thank you very much to all the volunteers who worked many hours or days to complete the fall 2011 Chow Mein Takeout. Thanks also to the many Businesses and individuals who donated supplies, funds and use of equipment."

Here are the financial particulars:

2003 tickets sold.....	\$20,030.00
1956 tickets redeemed	
Total revenue from tickets.....	\$20,030.00
Income from sauce and incidentals.....	334.35
Total Gross Income.....	\$20,364.35
Total Expense.....	4,613.27
Total Profit.....	\$15,751.08

BTSA thanks the following who made donations to the Supper:

Bean Sprouts • Glen Tanaka, Jim Wallace
Gouw's Onions
Large Plastic bags • Sonny Nakashima
R. Nakagama Co. • Ken and Vicki Nakagama
P&H Milling Group • Bob Grebinsky
Pickles • Wanda, Sumi and Joe Tomiyama
Regent Restaurant • Wayne Kwan
Super Store • Ken Tanigami
Westbridge Const • Frank Beekman

Dear Dharma Friends,



THE 3RD ANNUAL BAKE AND CRAFT SALE

is fast approaching: **Saturday, November 26, 1-3 p.m.**

You may begin to see posters and free media ads popping up in the next few weeks. The much anticipated sushi, manju and mein noodles will be available. As everyone turns their minds to holiday celebrations, we have an opportunity to think about and help improve the lives of others. In appreciation of our good fortune, half of the proceeds from the bake and craft sale will be donated to 3 local charitable organizations.

If you would like to donate baking or crafts we would be thrilled to accept them. You can drop off your crafts or baking from 9am to 12 noon on the 26th in the Temple multipurpose room.

If you would like to donate your time, it should be a fun, short event to participate in. Please contact me and I will let you know what spots need to be filled.

If you have questions, concerns or would like to volunteer at the event, please contact:
Brenda Ikuta (403) 317-0078 or email at rolikuta@shaw.ca

Last, but not least, we always need customers! So mark the date on your calendar and come join us on Saturday, **November 26**. We would love to see you!

Thank you in advance for your generosity!
In Gassho,
Brenda Ikuta

TOBAN UPDATE

Toban Schedule

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

November: Toban 1

December: Toban 2

January: Toban 4

February: Toban 1

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 4** for all their tasks during the month of October. They also cooked part of the meal and served at the funeral of Aya Hironaka, who was a member of Toban 3.

Thanks to all Toban groups for help in serving and providing baking for the coffee breaks at the ABC.

Mein-Making on November 12 – Please let your Toban leader know that you can help. She can relay this to Jan Okamura and Pat Sassa, coordinators for work planning.

Thanks to everyone for helping out at the Chow Mein Supper and especially for the great coordination and non-stop work by Pat Sassa, Jan Okamura and Roland Ikuta.

SOUP KITCHEN

Toban leaders (or their designates) will coordinate four Soup Kitchen dates in the new year. Please note that participants do not have to all be from the same toban and that friends and supporters of BTSA are welcome to volunteer for these important events. Let the coordinator of the date you wish to participate know you are available.

January 24	Toban 2 (Sumie)
February 22	Toban 4 (Jan)
March 21	Toban 3 (Pat)
April 4	Toban 1 (Lilly)



BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

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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

October 2011

- Richard & Val Boras
- Judy Fukushima
- Shirley Higa
- Marie Y. Hirashima
- Tomi Hisaoka
- Mike Honda
- Rumiko Ibuki
- Judy M. Irvine
- Sue Kado
- Sadae Kanegawa
- Fujiye Kariatsumari
- Chizuko Kimura
- Eileen Kunimoto
- Hisaye Kunimoto
- Elizabeth Machida
- Katoye Maruno
- Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno
- Gary & Beverly McIlroy
- Helen Miyagawa
- Ken & Vickie Nakagama
- Mitsuko Nishi
- Kaz & Setsuko Ohno
- May Ohno
- Sut & Neva Oishi
- Rumi & Chuck Okubo
- Brian Osaka
- Doreen G. Osaka
- Kay Osaka
- Yumiko Osaka
- Hisae Price
- Bob & Eiko Shigehiro
- Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
- Fumi Sugimoto
- Noboru & Kazuko Sugimoto
- Tomiko Sugimoto
- Fuji Takeda
- Reiko Takeyasu
- Glen & Pam Tanaka
- Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
- Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Total \$1,815

Other Donations

October 2011

- Roy & Nancy Adachi
- Bal Boora
- Marj Fujita
- Janet Hinatsu
- Marshall and Sally Hironaka
- Tom & Lily Kaga
- Tak & Jan Okamura
- Jack Panesar
- Gordon & Joy Saruwatari
- Florence Senda
- Harry Sugimoto
- Noris & Sachi Taguchi
- Sam & Betty Taniguchi
- Bill Teshima
- Kimiye Tsuji
- Ronald & Kathryn Yoshida

Total \$3,010

JSBTC Day Donations

October 2011

(To be forwarded to JSBTC Office)

Total \$965

Anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print in the donation lists, please inform us so it may be omitted. 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

No practice Nov 10 & 17, Dec 22 & 29

Contact: Katie at 403.327.4296 or katiinak@shaw.ca

Tonari Gumi

Tuesdays 12 - 3 pm

Taiko Class

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

Will run through Nov and break for Dec. 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

Runs through November 24 with winter session beginning in the new year.

Aiki Breathing Class with Lincoln Chew

Runs through November 21. Make-up session TBA.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta expresses heartfelt sympathy to those who have lost loved ones.

Mrs. Aya Hironaka (74) Oct. 11, 2011

Mrs. Yoshie Shirakawa (80) Oct. 23, 2011

Interested BTSA Members: Nikkei Cultural Society (NCS) national office has announced that David Pepper specialist in Japanese artifacts is willing to visit Lethbridge to evaluate artifacts held by local community members. If there is an interest NCS Lethbridge and District will sponsor his visit and rent the BTSA Board room for the event. Cost will be \$10 per item, by appointment only with evaluation of two items per customer and a limitation of 10-12 people for the day. Contact: Pat Sassa, 403 329 3105 or sas7@telus.net

Used Vases Welcomed

Thank you to all who have donated their used flower vases in the past years. Our total receipts from these vases netted \$292.75 and are to go to the Dharma Class. The most recent florist that has paid for our vases is Flowers on Ninth and the owner was very generous. Members and the groups who volunteer to send floral arrangements may wish to support this florist for their floral needs. Keep bringing your vases and put them in the closet by the kitchen. Thanks again. - Jan Okamura

BUDDHIST Q & A

What do we need for an o-butsudan

(お仏壇のお荘嚴は)?

As I explained in the last issue, since an o-butsudan represents the realm of Enlightenment or the Pure Land of Amida Buddha we need a Myogo (Namo Amida Butsu) or portrait, or statue of Amida Buddha in the centre of an o-butsudan.

Obutsudans without one of these reverences is like an empty house. It is also adorned with rice, flowers, a candle, and an incense to express our gratitude to wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha.

Calgary will be the host city for the 2015 World Buddhist Women's Convention (WBWC).

Theme: "Embraced by the Oneness of Life"

Event Location: Calgary, AB Canada

Event Dates: Saturday, May 30

Sunday, May 31, 2015

The JSBTCWF appreciate your support and feel that working collectively, we can strengthen our Jodo Shinshu Sangha and truly embrace the teachings of the Nembutsu.

Lorita Ichikawa and Donna Dubbelboer are on the 2015 WBWC Committee.

Thanks to the support of the BTSA we have sold \$82,000 worth of gift cards and have made \$2,700.00 since the program started for the WBW Convention in Calgary.

If you'd like to order anything special for your Christmas gift needs, let us know as the order will be going in fairly soon.

To see what's available, go to the most recent listing at: <http://www.shopandsupport.ca/newsas/info/RetailPartners-Alpha>

Thank you very much for your support.

Donna Dubbelboer
403.381.7643

RELAX, TRUST, THANK

Jeff Wilson and Jodo Shinshu

Three action words for an understanding of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism were offered by Dr. Jeff Wilson in a public lecture at the temple on Oct. 21: relax, trust, thank.

Jodo Shinshu accepts people as they are so they should relax and not try to be something other than themselves, he said. Paraphrasing Shinran's self-description as a "foolish, ignorant being", he said most people are regular, foolish and ordinary in their natural, relaxed state. In Jodo Shinshu, being relaxed is the opposite of ego-based striving to be something other than one's self.

He noted that while there is nothing wrong with trying to better oneself through various practices, that process is not only difficult but often accompanied by ego enlargement which contradicts the very notion of "becoming better" as a person.

As an example, Dr. Wilson said as one who practiced meditation to become a better person he discovered the need for self-congratulation about his progress, but as soon as he boasted about it, he simply showed himself to be a "jerk" in need of ego-deflation.

The second action word—trust—in understanding Jodo Shinshu is to accept the causes and conditions that created the setting one finds oneself in. He said that the interconnectedness of all life means our wellbeing is dependent upon many others, both people and things.

By way of illustration, Professor Wilson said when we decide to travel on an airplane, we trust the pilot is experienced and the mechanics have insured the plane's airworthiness. Once airborne, trust might be seen in our inability to determine the fate of the aircraft; we trust we will arrive safely. This trusting in something beyond ourselves, he said is akin to placing ourselves in Amida's power and is a key notion in Jodo Shinshu.

Thank or thanking is the third action word and it arises from the insights we gain through relaxing and trusting, he said. The outcome is "a grateful heart" which is the center of the onembutsu, a joyful and humble expression of thanks. Moreover, when we realize how much we have and how much of our life is beyond ourselves, the expression of onembutsu could take the form of looking after others or volunteering.

Originally, the idea of a grateful heart is the starting point, but he said gratitude grows deeper as one continues to practice Jodo Shinshu.

Dr. Wilson is an assistant professor of religious studies and East Asian studies at the Renison University College, University of Waterloo, in Waterloo, ON.

OCTOBER CHOW MEIN SUPPER



photos courtesy of Tak Tsujita



Upcoming Bake Sale on Nov 26 DHARMA KIDS' TABLE

The Dharma class will be selling goodies at the Bake & Craft Sale, including their popular Dharma Chips. All proceeds will go to making Christmas baskets for families in need.

Sunday, November 20

In preparation for the sale, the class will be packaging Dharma Chips in the kitchen. Hope you can join the fun!



Sam Hilgersom (left) and Kai Ichikawa take instruction from David Tanaka in the Youth Taiko Class held on Tuesdays at 6:30.

MORE! CHOW MEIN SUPPER



photos courtesy of John Dubbelboer and Akira Ichikawa

November & December 2011 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

NOVEMBER: TOBAN 1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 1	1:30pm Karaoke 2	10:30am Gentle Yoga 7pm SAB Choir 3		
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service 6	11am Aiki Breathing class 7	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 8	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTS board meeting 9	10:30am Gentle Yoga NO SAB Choir 10		8am Mein-making, in preparation for bake sale Interfaith Conference 12
10 - 10:20am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 13	11am Aiki Breathing class 14	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 15	1:30pm Karaoke 16	10:30am Gentle Yoga NO SAB Choir 17		
10 - 10:20am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 20	11am Aiki Breathing class 21	12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 22	1:30pm Karaoke 23	10:30am Gentle Yoga 7pm SAB Choir 24	Hikari deadline	Bake & Craft Sale 1-3pm 26
10 - 10:20am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 27		12 noon Tonari Gumi 7pm Taiko (6:30 youth) 29	1:30pm Karaoke 30			

DECEMBER: TOBAN 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				7pm SAB Choir 1		
10:30am Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service 4		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	
10 - 10:20am Dharma Study 10:30am Bodhi Day Service 11		12 noon Tonari Gumi 13	1:30pm Karaoke 7pm BTS board meeting 14	7pm SAB Choir 15		
10 - 10:20am Dharma Study 10:30am Regular Service 18		12 noon Tonari Gumi 20				
No Service Hikari Deadline 25		12 noon Tonari Gumi 27				Joya-no-Kane (Year End Bell Ringing) at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden 31