



Hikari – The Light

Newsletter of the Buddhist Federation of Alberta

November 2007 Edition

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Song of Evening Glow

*“When the sunset colors deepen in the twilight still,
Ding-dong, the temple bells are calling from the hill,
Let us join hands and together leave for home,
Let us follow the crows as they fly back to their home.”*

One day I visited one of our members at an old age home. I have known her for some time. I was told recently, by her family, that she was diagnosed with dementia. When I visited her she was sitting alone, looking down quietly. I approached her and asked, “How are you today?” There was no response. She still kept looking down showing no emotion. She was awake, but did not respond to me. She was completely in her own world. I gently held her hand, which was resting on the arm of her chair. Then I started singing to her in a low voice: “Yuyake koyake” (Song of Evening Glow – An English translation is written above.). I thought to myself that she must have heard or sung the song many times when she was a child. I expected her to remember the song and respond in some way. Sure enough, she looked at me and squeezed my hand. Her countenance had changed. I kept on singing. She smiled and started



tapping her hand on the arm of the chair in beat with the song. As I sang, I asked her again, “How are you?” She responded: “Okagesama de genki desuyo, Namo Amida Butsu” (I am fine

with many blessings. Thank you.) She remembered not only the song, but also a beautiful expression of gratitude we often utter in our everyday lives.

One of these days I may become like her. What words or phrases I will recall, I wonder to myself. Every day I recite “Okagesamade, Namo Amida Butsu” before the family’ shrine. I cannot predict how I will be as I approach death. I hope I can recall this phrase, recite it in gratitude and pass away peacefully.

However, whether I remember or utter the words, I am all right. Why? Because “Namo Amida Butsu” is, in essence, Amida’s call to me working each moment and every day to awaken me the unseen blessings and assuring me that “No matter what happens in your life I am with you. Return to my home of Enlightenment” How wonderful it is that Namo Amida Butsu, a living Buddha, is working day and night for me and guiding me in my journey to the true home of Enlightenment.

*In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi,
Minister*

仏恩に報いる行い

「新しいお寺が本当に出来るのでしょうか。」「お金は十分あるのですか。」「会員が減るといことはありませんか。」「子供たちも成長すれば、大きな町に移っていきますし。。。そのために私達の経済的な負担が大きくなることはありませんか。」「仏様の教えがこのような小さな町で、日本人も多くない処で、将来伝わっていくのでしょうか。」このような心配の声を耳にします。仏教会のことについて心配して下さる方々がおられることは心強く、まことに有難いことです。

確かに私達の人生は「心配」がつきものです。「思い通りにならないこと」が次から次へと出てきます。「心配」はつきることがありません。ところが私達のもつ心配は、「自分自身を見通す智慧がないことより起こるのですよ」と観ておられるのが仏様(覚者—Buddha)であります。実は私達が日常「心配」していることよりも、もっと「私達自身のおろかさ」を深く心配して下さっている方(仏様)がおられるのです。すべてを思い通りにしたい、都合よくしたい、と思うのは、私達の心、おろかさの心、によるものです。そのような心を持つ私達に、大きな智慧の光をもたらして下さるのが仏様であると言えましょう。そして、「仏様の光に日々出遇うことが大切である」と教えて下さっているのが親鸞様なのです。この光に出遇う時、「私達の心配」はすべて仏様にお任せして、自分の出来ることを勤めさせて頂こうという気持ちになるのです。これを「報恩の行い」、「感謝の行動」と申します。幸いにして、私達は「私自身のおろかさ」を日夜心配して下さる方に出遇うことが出来ました。せいぜい、力いっぱい、報恩の勤めに精進させていただきます。合掌 泉

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Peacefulness Through a Bowl of Tea

There are many moments that may move you deeply and some moments that may make you feel overwhelmed with gratitude. For me I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn about the spirit of tea.

Reverend Watanabe, a very talented Sensei took the time to teach diligent students every Wednesday evening "Sencha," a form of serving and drinking tea in five small teacups. Sensei introduced the elegant simplicity and formal procedures of this enjoyable style of sharing tea with friends. Little did I know that this invaluable training would lead me to another style of serving tea—"Chanoyu."

Sencha and Chanoyu, both styles of tea ceremony requires complete concentration. Every movement or step is precise, deliberate and done with ease—calmly and peacefully. When you enter the tearoom, the atmosphere is very harmonious and peaceful. Mutual respect is shared between guests and the host. There is no distinction of status or rank. Respect is also shown towards the beautiful tea utensils used in the tea ceremony. When I am in this frame of mind of preparing and serving tea, I am mindful of what I am doing. The outside world is blocked out of my mind. Pressures and tensions of the outside world are totally removed.

The guests kneel on the tatami, waiting patiently for the host to enter the room. I as the host concentrate on performing the tea ceremony as perfectly as I can. The cloth I use and all the utensils are purified or cleansed. I add two scoops of powdered green tea (matcha) into the tea bowl, add hot water and whisk it with a tea whisk until it gets frothy. I make the tea with all of my heart. I gracefully place the bowl of tea in front of my guests and bow with a smile. A polite gesture for them to share with me "peace in a bowl of tea."

—Denise Takao



BTSA Update

Building Progress

Our building committee chair, Tak Okamura, is putting in long hours meeting with the architect and engineers putting the final touches on the building plans. Tak reports that the schedule has slipped a little because of delays in making key decisions. One of those decisions was whether or not to put in an all-stainless steel commercial kitchen but that turned out to be unnecessary. As it stands we will be able to continue our chow mein suppers as long as all of the surfaces are clear, durable and washable. There will be some stainless steel installations but not all. So this will result in a considerable saving. Another issue was whether or not to install a fire sprinkler system. This was not necessary as our building isn't large enough to require it. Given the costs it was decided not to install a sprinkler system. The final drawings should be completed soon and we are hopeful that the city will give approval so that we can begin construction in January.

The colour schemes for the floor and wall coverings will be on display at the Alberta Buddhist Conference.

Fundraising

The fundraising committee is picking up speed and each month there are a few more donations. We have received a number of pledges and donations and the total amount is growing steadily. The committee will have materials available for the Alberta Buddhist Conference for our members to help make donating simple.

Alberta Buddhist Conference

Dr. Koyo Kubose of the Kubose Foundation, Chicago, will be the main speaker at the 29th annual Alberta Buddhist Conference set for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, November 9-11 in Lethbridge. Dr. John Harding from the University of Lethbridge and James Martin sensei, assistant Minister of the Calgary Buddhist Temple our own Rev. Izumi will also speak. "Embracing Buddhism" is the theme. There will be a social at the Honpa Buddhist temple on Friday at 7:00pm. The conference will be held on Saturday at the Lethbridge Lodge starting with registration at 8:30am and the Opening Session at 9:00am. There will also be a workshop in the afternoon, a BTSA update presentation, a BCC update from Socho Fujikawa. The day will end with the banquet. The closing service will be held on Sunday, November 11th at the Honpa Temple at 10:30am.

Executive Committee Activities

The BTSA Executive, David Major, Jim Tsukishima, Akira Ichikawa and Robert Takaguchi, have met to discuss several issues that need to be addressed and taken back to the board for approval. For example, planning a groundbreaking ceremony for the new building, and putting the Honpa property up for sale.

The next BTSA meeting will be at 7:00pm on November 14, 2007 at the Lethbridge Buddhist Temple. Please feel welcome to attend the meeting. It is an excellent way to get first hand information about our progress.

Japanese Conversational Language Class

Do you want to learn Japanese quickly and have fun at the same time? Well maybe Rev. Izumi's Japanese Conversational Language Class is just what you need.

Rev. Izumi will teach on Sunday afternoons from 2-3 pm at the North Temple (Lethbridge Buddhist Church on 13th Street North.) He will teach an introductory level which will cover the following areas:

Basic Vocabulary and Expressions needed in specific situations. E.g., restaurant, shopping...

Sentence Structures/Patterns- create many sentences using patterns just learned and using new words in original sentences.

Kanji Corner- brief introduction and their

meanings along with basic stroke orders. (Very basic and easy everyday use Kanji.)

Group Practice or Study Session.

When Sensei is away, there will be classes. Students will have a practice or study session in which they will try to initiate conversations in Japanese to help strengthen speaking and comprehension skills.

If you miss a class, don't worry. You can receive that day's lesson via email.

No registration fee

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detakao@telus.net

Vision

The Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta is dedicated to being an open Jodo Shinshu Sangha organization that appreciates, promotes, preserves and practices the Buddha Dharma teaching.

Mission

The mission of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta is to gratefully promote and practice Buddha Dharma teaching through:

- ✦ Communication
- ✦ Community
- ✦ Tradition
- ✦ Education
- ✦ Resource Development

Guiding Principles

A response by the BTSA must always involve the following key factors:

- ✦ Ensure that our motivation is a sense of gratitude and compassion.
- ✦ Take into account the widest possible perspective.
- ✦ Be vigilant in ensuring that we remain honest, self-aware, unbiased and trustworthy; the danger otherwise is that we may fall victim to self-delusion.
- ✦ In the face of any real ethical challenge, respond in a spirit of humility.
- ✦ Ensure our interaction with the community by promoting dedication, commitment and involvement.
- ✦ Strive to keep in mind the primary goal of the wellbeing of humanity as a whole and the planet we inhabit.



Artist's rendering of new temple

BTSA Fundraising November Update

The BTSA now has an official status as a charitable organization. Official tax receipts can now be issued by the BTSA for any charitable donations. Any one wishing to donate to the building fund can make a one time donation or pledge their donation over the next 3-5 years. A plaque with the donors name will be included in our donor wall. The target for the fund raising committee is \$450,000. The donor levels are as follows:

| | |
|------------|----------------------|
| Diamond = | \$25,000 or greater |
| Emerald | \$17500 to \$24,999 |
| Platinum = | \$10,000 to \$17,499 |
| Gold = | \$5,000 to \$9,999 |
| Silver = | \$2,500 to \$4,999 |
| Bronze = | \$1,000 to \$2,499 |

Diamond level donors

- ♦ Rev. and Mrs. Yasuo Izumi

Platinum level donors

- ♦ D.J. Major and the Hamabata family in memory of Kamasuke Hamabata and Cheryl Prins
- ♦ Noris Taguchi
- ♦ S.K. Ikuta and Family
- ♦ Tak & Jan Okamura
- ♦ Fujiye Kariatsumari and Family in memory of Tokiyoshi and Katsuo Kariatsumari
- ♦ Mas and Miyo Sunada

Gold level donors

- ♦ Pat and Roy Sassa in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Tomomi C. Okutake and Mr. and Mrs.

Tsuneki Sassa

- ♦ Kaz and Setsuko Ohno
- ♦ Tomiko Kobayashi

The BTSA greatly appreciates the contribution from the above in starting the fund raising drive.

To date we have raised \$100,000 in donations or pledges.

To make a contribution or pledge please contact Jim Tsukishima (327-1279) mts-farm@telus.net, Roland Ikuta (317-0078) Rolikuta@shaw.ca or send cheques to Robert Takaguchi (P.O. Box 1249 Raymond, Alberta T0K-2S0).

Please note that we have added an Emerald Level

PLEDGE FORM



I WISH TO SUPPORT THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province/State: _____ Postal /Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

CONTRIBUTION

TOTAL CONTRIBUTION: \$ _____

____ Monthly Instalments of \$ _____ for ____ years

____ Yearly Instalments of \$ _____ for ____ years

____ One-time Donation of \$ _____

Notation: (Eg., In memory of) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

____ I wish for my contribution to remain confidential

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta
C/O Treasurer Robert Takaguchi, Box 1249,
Raymond, Alberta T0K 2S0



ABC

The upcoming Alberta Buddhist Conference will be **kid friendly!** We have activities planned for children, youth and interested parents, as well as “child-minders” for the younger set.

Saturday, November 10 we will have mask-making in the morning. This project is open to all ages. There will be a wide range of materials. The finished works will be on display at the evening’s banquet. In the afternoon, a gym with several activities will be available, as well as a drumming/music session.

Dharma youth, Charlotte Ikuta, soloist, will be joined by the Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir, as part of the Banquet entertainment, in which children and youth will exhibit the creative results of their activities.



Charlotte, with her Dad, Roland Ikuta selling sno cones at the 2007 Bon Odori

RECIPES WANTED

The Children & Youth Dharma Class are planning their next fundraiser.

We ask all members to participate in a BTSA cook book with **personal recipes, stories, poems, artwork and photos.**

Please give some thought to what you would like to contribute.

We will be accepting items at the Alberta Buddhist Conference, as well as providing information about where you can send your items.

November 11, during the Sunday morning service, youth are welcome and encouraged to stay, but a room will be available for children and mothers with infants if needed.

If you would like to be added to the Dharma Class email list or need further information, please contact Brenda at 317-0078 or Maya at 380-4330.

November - December Schedule 11月12月 予定表

November

3 (Sat) Hoji*
 4 (Sun) Regular Service at NT **/ Coaldale (afternoon at 2:00pm)
 9 (Fri) Alberta Buddhist Conference Registration at ST***
 10 (Sat) ABC at Lethbridge Lodge
 11 (Sun) ABC at ST
 12 (Mon) Hoji
 14 (Wed) BTSA Meeting at NT
 18 (Sun) Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service at ST
 20 (Tue) 10:45am - 11:15am - Worship Service (Buddhism) at Chinook Regional Hospital
 22 (Thu) Hikari (The Light) Preparation
 25 (Sun) Shotsuki Memorial Service at NT

December

2 (Sun) Regular Service at ST – Bodhi Day / Coaldale (afternoon at 2:00p.m.)
 9 (Sun) Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service at ST
 16 (Sun) Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service at NT
 31 (Mon) Joya-e (Year End Service) at NT (8:00pm.)
 Joya-e at Nikka Yuko Garden (11:30pm)

* Hoji means a private memorial service at home or temple
 ** NT means North Temple (Lethbridge Buddhist Temple)
 *** ST means South Temple (Honpa Buddhist Temple)

Unless otherwise indicated, all services starts at 10:30am
 Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir Practice: Every Thursday from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at ST.

If you are unable to attend temple Services due to illness, please feel free to call Rev. Izumi at 382-7024. He is happy to visit you privately.

Calendar of Events

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir Practice

Every Thursday, 7-8:30 pm at south temple.

Japanese Language Class

Classes in Japanese language and Buddhism will be held every Sunday afternoon, 2-3 pm at north temple. If you are interested please contact Izumi Sensei

Note: No class Nov. 4 and Nov. 11

Taiko Practice

Taiko (Japanese Drum) practice is every Tuesday from 6:30-8:30 pm at south (Honpa) temple. The first hour is youth practice (10-18 years of age) and the second hour is for adults although anyone can practice during one or both hours. Organized by the Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area Contact David Tanaka, ph. 330-1548 david@eyesquared.com

Obituaries

We express our heartfelt sympathy to those who have lost loved ones.

Mrs. Sueno Ikeda

94 years old
 Sept. 28, 2007

Mr. Masanori Kokaji

59 years old
 Oct. 20, 2007

Buddhist Memorial Service 仏教徒の年忌法要

It is Buddhist tradition that memorial services are performed by family members and friends on the following years. It is a time for us to listen to Buddha's teaching and encounter the universal wisdom and compassion in the fond memories of the deceased. It is a time to express our appreciation to those who taught us life of ever changing and precious life here and now. It is also a time to practice "Dana" (spirit of giving and generosity out of gratitude in encountering a wonderful teaching of spiritual liberation.)

We must give an opportunity to our children and grand children to listen and appreciate Buddha's teaching. Otherwise how can we expect them to live a Buddhist life?

Year of Death Memorial Service to be of your loved one performed in 2007

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 2006 . . First Year Memorial Service | 一周忌 |
| 2005 . . 3rd Year Memorial Service | 三回忌 |
| 2001 . . 7th Year Memorial Service | 七回忌 |
| 1995 . . 13th Year Memorial Service | 十三回忌 |
| 1991 . . 17th Year Memorial Service | 十七回忌 |
| 1983 . . 25th Year Memorial Service | 二十五回忌 |
| 1975 . . 33rd Year Memorial Service | 三十三回忌 |
| 1958 . . 50th Year Memorial Service | 五十回忌 |