



THE SANGHA STREAM

April 2026

MINISTER ARTICLE

Springtime in Calgary is such a welcomed time of the year. Plants and trees that lay dormant during the winter start to return with beauty and fragrance. There is more light and warmth as the days move closer to summer and we find more people enjoying activities outdoors. For those of us who practice quiet reflection or meditation the warmer days experienced in spring and summer provide an opportunity to move our practice outdoors. For various reasons sitting in quiet meditation is not a practice enjoyed by everyone.

Perhaps this is why some people choose to follow Jodo Shinshu Buddhism because it is not heavily weighted in traditional meditation. However, Jodo Shinshu Buddhism does have a meditative practice of settling the mind in preparation to hear the Light of the Dharma. It is the historical practice of chanting. The following article helps us understand the depth expressed through chanting.

By: Mark Unno

From: March 2, 2026 – Lion's Roar

How to Practice Chanting

As long as Buddhism has existed, chanting has been one of its core practices. Originally, both recitation and chanting were used as ways to help memorize teachings, as well as expressions of commitment. Many schools of Buddhism today still chant in Pali, the language of the historical Buddha.

In some schools, such as Zen and Theravada, silent, seated meditation is regarded as the most central practice, with chanting seen as preparation for meditation. In other schools, such as Pure Land, chanting is the central practice. In many schools of Mahayana Buddhism, chanting is viewed as coming from the deepest level of reality, the true nature of the self, which is emptiness, oneness, or the formless source of the buddha body, the dharmakaya.

Chanting therefore doesn't come from us deluded sentient beings with dualistic intentions of ego-consciousness, but instead from cosmic buddhas and bodhisattvas such as Mahavairocana or Avalokitesvara, who are subtle manifestations of cosmic oneness and buddhanature.



When we're fully embodied and mindful in chanting, then many minds become as one mind, and one mind releases into no mind, emptiness, and the great flow of the oneness of reality.

Chanting is neither active nor passive—it's receptive. We chant so we can receive the spontaneous cosmic power of no-self, emptiness, and oneness. So rather than being the instigator, the chanting practitioner is the recipient of the power of awakening—they are the receptive vessel of the Buddha's wisdom and compassion. This notion is present in many chants, such as those about entrusting ourselves to the power of cosmic buddhas, like *Namo Sakyamuni Buddha*, *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo*, *Namu Amida Butsu*, which means, "I take refuge in the Buddha Shakyamuni, I take refuge in the Lotus Sutra, I entrust myself to Amida Buddha."

Chanting involves a great deal of conscious effort for the beginner who's trying to memorize a chant, learn the right tone and tempo, and—if chanting in a group—blend with the others.

But as we deepen in our practice, there's gradually less conscious effort and a greater sense of letting go into the flow of chanting. This is often accompanied by a shift in the physical center of chanting, as we feel it move from the throat to the heart to deep in the abdomen and, ultimately, into buddhanature, the deep flow of the oneness of reality.

Although Buddhist chanting can have a melody, overall, it's more monotonic, as Buddhist contemplative practices are based in equanimity and repose. This is often in contrast with other religious traditions—in Christianity, for example, there's more singing than chanting, and even Gregorian chants are more melodic than much of Buddhist chanting. Christian melodies and chants are meant to convey the feeling of transcendence into heaven or the spirit rising in devotion to the divine. In contrast, Buddhist chanting conveys a deepening awareness of nirvana or cosmic oneness. But even though in Buddhism the emphasis is on equanimity, repose, and the contemplative flow of chanting, there's also deep joy that arises from the feeling of release from the bonds of attachment and suffering and of the great compassion realized in interdependence with all beings.

If you chant as part of a sangha, in time you'll find that your voice more easily blends with the voices of others. Yet, in blending with others, we do not erase our individuality. Rather, our individuality enriches the sound of group chanting and, indeed, the chorus is greater than the sum of its parts. Each of our voices carries the imprint of our personality and experiences. No-self or emptiness is inseparable from the multifarious manifestations of form.

Because our existence is impermanent, and each moment is precious, we should devote our entire being to each opportunity to chant and to each and every syllable. When we're fully embodied and mindful in chanting, then many minds become as one mind, and one mind releases into no mind, emptiness, and the great flow of the oneness of reality.



Ultimately, whether we're physically in a group or alone, each time we chant, all beings—everywhere, past, present, and future—blend, dissolve, and become as one with us in the great journey of boundless compassion.

Prepare the Space

Select a chant such as the Heart Sutra, either in an Asian scriptural language or in English translation. You might find an online recording to see what it sounds like in any given tradition. Find or create a contemplative space with an altar containing a statue, image, or scroll. Light incense (optional), and if available, place a chanting bell next to your meditation cushion or seat, arranged to face the altar.

Prepare Body-Mind

Briefly prepare body-mind with a moment of seated, silent meditation. Bow to conclude the meditation and pick up the chant with both hands. It can help to have the chant on a stiff card if you don't have a book. Lift the chant above your head and bow lightly. Begin chanting by ringing the bell, relaxing into it.

Let the Chant Unfold

The power of chanting arises from deep within, as you let go of the dualistic mind's desire to control reality. So, allow the chant to unfold. Focus more on the continuous sound of the chant rather than on the meaning of the words. Over time, as you deepen your chanting and enter into the flow of oneness beyond words, the meaning will become apparent naturally. To finish, lift the chant card, book, or paper above your head and bow lightly. Ring the bell and bow again.

*Mark Unno is an ordained priest in the Shin Buddhist tradition and an Associate Professor of Buddhism at the University of Oregon. He is the author of *Shingon Refractions: Myoe and the Mantra of Light*, and the editor of *Buddhism and Psychotherapy Across Cultures*.*

Namo Amida Butsu
Robert Gubenco Sensei



Calgary Buddhist Temple

658-1st Ave N.E.
Calgary, Alberta

Telephone: (1)403-263-5723

www.calgary-buddhist.ab.ca



APRIL 2026 MEMORIAL (SHOTSUKI) SERVICE LIST

Camalot Bernier
Edward Blanton
Mary Blanton
William Blanton
Loty Flores
Keiko Gomyo
Eleanor Halton

Butch Hayashi
Marion Ishii
Rev. Susumu Ikuta
Kanakano Kimura
Amy Kitagawa
Lewis McKibben Jr.
Roy Nagata
Mitsuko Nishi

Miyeko Julie Oshiro
Barbara Pittman
Margaret Rice
Prince Shotoku Taishi
Ronnie Takeda
Ronald Tamaki
Yoshiko Teshima

2026 CALGARY BUDDHIST TEMPLE MEMBERSHIP

PLEASE SUBSCRIBE, SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN OUR SANGHA

The 2026 Calgary Buddhist Temple membership form is now available (see last page of the newsletter). Please consider taking out a membership to help support the temple. Membership is required for voting privileges at the Calgary Buddhist Temple.

Please note that of the \$150 Membership fee, \$100 goes to our national organization, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC). The JSBTC consists of volunteer board members from temples across Canada; it provides funding for the Bishop (Socho) of Canada, funding and management of health and wellness benefits for ministers, leadership through the Living Dharma Centre, and financial and investment oversight.

AUUNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SAVE THE DATE - APRIL 12TH

Save the date for the AGM on April 12th 2026.



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Women's Federation's 2026 Fundraiser

JSBTC WF is selling T-shirts for their fundraiser

The design was created by calligraphy artist, Noriko Maeda

Deadline to order t-shirts was March 31 but there will be a limited number of sizes and quantity at the Temple for sale at the end of April/early May.

\$25 each

Thank you for your support!



Meaning of the design
"Gassho/Hands
together in Peace"

Proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards the WF's costs in participating in the World Buddhist Women's Convention in Hawaii, 2027



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CALGARY DROP-IN CENTRE

Let's continue to think of others by providing lunch service on Sunday, May 3 at the Calgary Drop-In Centre downtown. Volunteers must be 18+ to participate. We leave from the Temple around 11:15am and walk over to the Drop-In Centre together or you can meet us there at 11:30am. We ask people to register to ensure we have the requested number of volunteers - <https://bit.ly/Drop-In-03May26>

SPRING IKEBANA CLASS

Classes will be held on Saturday afternoons at The Calgary Buddhist Temple from 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

The 5 classes are a series and the total cost including flower material and instruction is \$250 for Temple members and \$300 for non-members. No refunds for missed classes.

Students must have their own containers, hand pruners and kenzan (frog).

You can purchase these items from Rika or she can help you select suitable ones on your own if you contact her. These items are not included in the lesson cost.

Rika Saruwatari trained under Ms. Takako Yokoyama, and became a certified Shihan (teacher) in 2012.

光風未生流 (Kofu misho school ikebana) classes

- April 18
- May 2, 16, 30
- June 13

Rika's contact info koufuikebana@gmail.com.





IKEBANA-INSPIRED MOTHER'S DAY ARRANGEMENT

Saturday, May 9, 2025

Would you like to create a unique flower arrangement for someone special? Sangha Engagement is hoping to host an ikebana-inspired flower arrangement for your mother or for someone who deserves your thanks. This will be a basic workshop lead by the amazing, Rika Saruwatari is a certified Shihan (teacher) who was trained under Ms. Takako Yokoyama.



All materials will be provided. If you have ikebana scissors, please bring them, and if you don't, bring gardening cutters.

We are planning to hold a Dharma Time version for children from 10:00-12:00 pm, and the fee would be \$20/child accompanied by an adult. An adult workshop is planned on the same day from 2:00 pm -4:00 pm with a registration fee of \$30/person. Space will be limited.

Due to the current temple closure, please email calgarytemplesangha@gmail.com if you are interested in attending. By the end of April, you will be notified if this workshop is confirmed (or not), and payment will be due at that time. We're crossing our fingers that we'll be able to hold this fantastic workshop.



WOMEN'S FEDERATION CONVENTION



Next September 11-12 2027, the Women's Convention will be taking place in Hawaii. The convention happens every 4 years with the last one being held in Japan. Unlike the registration for Japan, you will need to make your own arrangements as we are not using a travel agency.

First book your accommodations at the Hilton Hawaii Village, you will get a confirmation number which you will use to register for the convention. Please note, the convention prices are in US dollars.

[VIEW THE VIDEO HERE](#)

Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort

September 11 – 12, 2027 Honolulu, Hawaii

www.hawaiibwa.org

Click **WBWC 2027 Main Page** for the following:

Convention Theme & Music
Logo and Posters

REGISTRATION

Advanced Hotel Reservation Link:

<https://www.eventleaf.com/e/WBWC2027staff>

CVENT Convention Registration: <https://cvent.me/ZzanPm>

June 30, 2026 Early registration deadline (\$325)

March 31, 2027 Regular registration deadline (\$350)

July 1, 2027 Late Registration deadline (\$375)

Schedule/Convention Program

Speakers

Workshops

Entertainment

Convention email address: wbwchawaii@honpahi.org



APRIL 2026 CBT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Spring has officially arrived; the spring equinox was March 20-21, the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere, when the daylight and darkness hours are equal.

As well, Shin Buddhists observe the Ohigan in mid-March, commemorating the equinox usually close to March 20-21.

Unfortunately, the fundraising activities so far in 2026 have been curtailed, but will resume as soon as we are again able to safely meet for in-house activities.

Please stay tuned for upcoming fundraising activity announcements.

We are accepting Everything Japanese items throughout the year. You can email Mickey at mhkuta@outlook.com

“STAMP” OUT WASTE WITH THE WOMEN’S FEDERATION



Save the Children-Canada collects used postage stamps for resale to dealers and collectors. Money raised by this method of fundraising is used to help provide a better life and a brighter future for children around the world and in Canada.



The JSBTC Women’s Federation accepts ALL stamps as well as foreign coins, no longer needed, for charity. Please save and deposit in the plastic container in the entrance of the temple to be taken to the WF Annual gathering for national consolidation.

THANK YOU VERY MOCHI

Mochi is a traditional Japanese rice cake made from mochigome, a short-grain, glutinous rice. It is known for its distinct, soft, stretchy, and chewy texture. It is a treat at the start of a new year said to symbolize prosperity, good fortune and longevity.

The Temple’s Sangha (community) Engagement will hold a “Thank You Very Mochi” get-together after service when the temple re-opens so stay-tuned!





PAST WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

CALGARY DROP-IN - DONATION CENTRE

On Sunday, March 22 from 1:00pm-4:00pm, several enthusiastic volunteers were at the Calgary Drop-In Centre Donation Centre. This family-friendly volunteer opportunity had us sorting clothing which is a crucial step to helping low-income individuals.





Thank you for supporting the community: Nathan, Rheigen, Austin, Trina, Laurie, Robert, Chris, Devry, Charlene, Emily, Susan, and Jean.





JSBTC WOMEN'S FEDERATION DANA DAY

Coinciding in the month of March along with International Women's Day, the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) Women's Federation (WF) held their annual "WF Dana Day" on Sunday, March 29. All donations made on this day OR donations made online which were identified "WF Dana Day", will be consolidated with Temples across Canada and directed specifically to national organization(s) promoting social welfare.

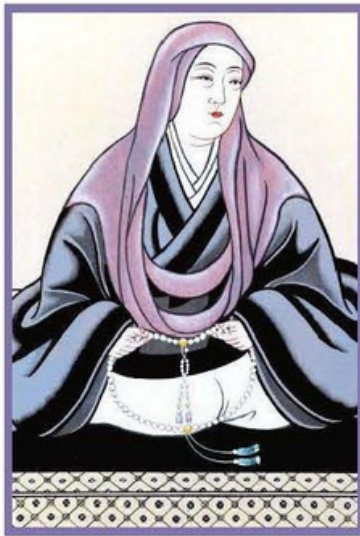
Last year, funds were sent to the President's Choice/PC Children's Charity where their mission is to remove hunger as a barrier to education for Canadian students and empower them with growing and cooking skills. Other charities supported by the WF Dana Day funds in the past have been the Canadian Women's Foundation, CareMakers Foundation, Canadian Mental Health Association, and others. The JSBTC Women's Federation sincerely thank you for your support.

In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, dana is not a practice we perform to become generous, but a natural response of gratitude, humility, and interdependence arising from the awakening to Amida Buddha's compassion.

THE WOMEN'S FEDERATION



Eshinni



Kakushinni

Have you ever wondered about the Women's Federation and what they do? The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) Women's Federation, Women's Fed, or simply the WF, began in 1976 and is now an active standing committee under the JSBTC, made up of member temple representatives.

The committee endeavors to follow in the footsteps of prestigious Buddhist women such as Eshinni, Shinran Shonin's wife, Kakushinni, Shinran's daughter, and countless women who have dedicated their lives to the practice of the Jodo Shinshu teachings and the spreading of the dharma. They are an inspiration, and the WF honor and endeavour to follow their example.



Why is the WF important?

Although the WF is not active in every JSBTC temple in Canada, they offer opportunities for all temples to participate. They do the following:

- Direct donations to national charities supporting social well-being through Dana Day.
- Offer financial assistance to the Canadian ministers and youth with funding programs.
- Offer coordination across Canada regarding involvement and representation at the World Buddhist Women's Conventions (WBWC) held every four years.
- Coordinate activities across Canada such as the Minister's Appreciation.
- Provide presentations of interest to a national audience.
- Provide two WF Secretary Generals who represent Canada at international meetings.

Calgary Buddhist Temple and the WF

- The nominal fee to be part of the WF is \$15 per person annually with those over 80 at no charge. We are grateful to the Temple for covering this fee for a set number of our members. One voting temple representative or delegate can attend WF Committee Meetings, and Observers are always welcome.
- The fee is used to support internal operations such as online meeting platform, offices expenses such as mailings and bank fees, in addition to supporting travel for the leadership and temple representatives to attend committee meetings.



- By being a WF member, individuals can participate in activities exclusive to WF members such as attending the World Buddhist Women's Convention – the 18th WBWC will be in 2027 in Hawaii!
- As of 2026, the Leadership team of the WF is made up of: Maureen Hatanaka, Kelowna Buddhist Temple; Myra Takasaki, Toronto Buddhist Church; Laurie Takeda, Calgary Buddhist Temple; and Marlene Frazer, Hamilton Buddhist Temple.
- The WF is a proud District of the World Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) which includes Japan Buddhist Women's Federation, Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Association, South America Buddhist Women's Association, and Buddhist Churches of America.

WF Aspiration

- The WF strives to honor all Buddhist women and share the teachings of the Buddha. The wish is to be a vibrant and inclusive organization that promotes Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for all Canadians.



FEBRUARY DONATIONS

Canada Helps

Dodds A,
Ghann, J.
Griggs, M.
Haddon, S.

Howard, L.
McCullagh, B.
Miyanishi, K.
Post, D.
Robson, T.

Stewart, M.
Sugimoto, L.
Sugimoto, S.
Wright, C.

Temple Donations

Caldwell, D.&C.
Delisle, Y.

Huntley, S.
In memory of Muneo & Connie Takeda
McCormack, D.
Odagaki, S.

Ota, F.
Wrolson, B.



2026 CBT Membership

Please take a few moments to complete the attached form and return it to the temple. Cheques can be made out to The Calgary Buddhist Temple. Mailing address: 207-6th St N.E. Calgary, Alberta T2E 3Y1. Tel: (403) 263-5723. Alternately, membership fee payments can be made online through [Canada Helps](https://canadahelps.org/en/dn/39361) (canadahelps.org/en/dn/39361) or via e-transfer (calgarybuddhisttemple@gmail.com). Just make sure to write "membership" in the message field. PDFs of completed forms can then be emailed to calgarybuddhisttemple@gmail.com.

Name:

Name:

Address:Line 1

Address: Line 2

City, Province,

Postal Code:

Telephone:

E-mail:

- Full Membership (\$150 per member)
- Student (Under 18) Membership –No Charge

Check to receive the CBT newsletter if you do not already receive it

___ by email

___ by mail

___ Please contact me regarding volunteering