



THE SANGHA STREAM

June 2024

MINISTER ARTICLE

As a youngster with an active imagination, I can remember occasions when being left alone in the dark was not an especially relaxing time. A time when having the glow of a soft night light was preferred over the density of complete darkness. For a youngster who was heavily influenced by their own imagination and naïve to the reality of the world darkness fed into the imagination like a slow-moving plot of a horror movie. In contrast to the darkness, clarity of being able to see from the light that transposed such darkness provided the means to find comfort and security.

Ironically, as a youngster having to close one's eyes and sit in darkness was not something to look forward to and might be considered unpleasant unless associated with some sort of youthful game. Yet, as an adult being able to find the time during the day to sit quietly with one's eyes closed and perhaps even preferring to do so in a dark room is far from unpleasant and provides an occasion to feel peace and comfort. Opening the eyes after a time of sitting quietly in the darkness, we are greeted by light which brings to life shapes, shades of color, movement, beauty, and a curiosity for adventure. In order to appreciate and understand the power of light we have to accept that darkness always travels together with light.

As a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist the reference to light has a significant meaning. Amida Buddha is the Japanese transliteration of two Sanskrit names of the Buddha; Amitabha (Limitless Light - Wisdom) and Amitayus (Limitless Life - Compassion). In the Sutra's we find that Amida Buddha is identified by various names represented by light, such as, Incomparable Light, Light of Purity, Light of Joy, Inconceivable Light, and Light Surpassing the Sun and Moon. The Light of Amida Buddha symbolizes the activity of Wisdom as Compassion leading us to inner peace, the Pure Land.

In volume 4, Issue 1, 2024 of the Jodo Shinshu International, A Buddhist Quarterly publication there is an excerpt from the Hongwanji Shuppansha publication Daijō, March 2004 that talks about light. The following words are from the excerpt.



MINISTER ARTICLE

The following is a poem called Subete wa hikaru (lit., “everything shines”) composed by Sakamura Shinmin.

Shine, shine, everything shines.

There is not a single thing that does not shine.

For those things that are not able to shine on their own,

They receive light from others, then shine.

Mr. Sakamura himself said that this poem is one of his favorites. Moreover, he added that this poem expresses the basis of his religious belief. He also said that even the brilliant light of the sun, which the moon receives then reflects, helped to remind him of the indescribable closeness he felt for the [Buddha’s] compassion.

In one letter that Shinran Shonin composed when he was eighty-eight years old, he wrote that he recalled hearing Master Honen say, “Persons of the Pure Land tradition attain birth in the Pure Land by becoming their foolish selves.” Here, “persons of the Pure Land” refers to Nembutsu practitioners who follow the path that leads to the Pure Land. It is said that they, illuminated by the Buddha’s light, come to realize their own foolish selves, and just as they are, they look up to persons who revere the Buddha’s light as they traverse to the Pure Land.

In truly realizing why Shinran Shonin adopted the name Gutoku for himself, why he referred to himself as a foolish being filled with blind passions, and why Honen Shonin said that persons of the Pure Land become their foolish selves, Mr. Hanada wrote,

*In the Buddha’s light my conceited pride is shattered,
my slavish mind is washed away,
and I can float on the green ocean of light.*

There is so much that can be said about the symbolism of light and what better way to end this article than by referencing the words from the last line of The Golden Chain; May every link in Amida Buddha’s golden chain of love be bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

Namo-Amida-Butsu

Robert Gubenco Sensei



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MINISTER JAMES' ARTICLE

Ever heard the phrase 'the salt of the earth'? Having some bad luck? Throw a little salt over the left shoulder!

In sumo wrestling the combatants throw salt in the ring (prior to the pushing and shoving and grunting) to purify the space and themselves.

If I was to ask you: "What are the essentials that humans need to sustain life?" I believe most would immediately say that water is the most essential because we can go for a fairly long period without food but a few days without water can be life threatening. But how about salty water?

A documentary I was watching recently detailed the role that salt plays in our lives and the absolute necessity it is for our health and well-being.

The documentary examined the amount of salt consumption of several life forms. It was incredibly wide ranging and dependent on several factors such as proximity to the ocean, or the salt level in the food eaten etc.

But it was the means various species will go to acquire salt lacking in the food that was very eye opening.

From goats liking the salt off paved roads in Canada to elephants in Africa entering deep dark caves to lick the mineral from the underground rocks, having salt in their diet was a necessity of life and every species found and consumed the required amount to continue living, **and nothing more!**

In past civilizations salt was as precious as gold and many sources and trade routes were established to supply us with this essential commodity. By adding salt to our food not only does it taste better, but by doing so, we have included an essential ingredient for living in our diet.

Today, a simple trip to the grocer's and we have all the salt we need and more! High blood pressure? Cut down on the salt! But hey, don't cut it out altogether! (As if I ever would!) chuckle.

What does this have to do with Buddhism? Well Buddhism is about finding the middle path. The documentary was a good reminder that too little can make us ill, but the Buddha also taught that too much can be unhealthy as well.

Whatever your personal desire/craving is, salt or otherwise, finding a balance between the extremes of too much or too little is essential to our well-being!

May the Buddha be with you!

In Gassho
Sensei James





JUNE 2024 MEMORIAL (SHOTSUKI) SERVICE LIST

Joyce Burkey
Brenda Cox
Michael Gubenco
William Lane Sr.

Tamiko Miyanishi
Seiji Mori
Shizu Nagai

Reiko Oishi
Heidi Terakita
Misao Teshima
Takao Teshima

TEMPLE SERVICE REMINDERS

JUNE SERVICES

- Sunday, June 2nd - Shotsuki/Monthly Memorial at 10:00 am
- Wednesday, June 5th - Meditation Body Scan from 7:00 to 8:00 pm
- Tuesday, June 11th - Meditation and Naikan Reflection from 7:00 to 8:00 pm
- Sunday, June 16th – Temple closed in lieu of having our annual Family Day picnic at Edworthy Park – Site #2
- Tuesday, June 25th - Meditation and Naikan Reflection from 7:00 to 8:00 pm



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Sunday, June 2, 2024

CALGARY DROP-IN CENTRE

We're continuing to support our temple community by providing lunch service at the Calgary Drop-In (DI) Centre.

Please join us on June 2 by registering online at:
<https://bit.ly/community-02Jun24>



Kanzashi handmade by FVBT which are hair ornaments that have a clip on the back. These tokens of appreciation were made at different times so each are unique.

KANZASHI IN GRATITUDE

In 1955, the Fraser Valley Buddhist Temple was opened. It survived intact for 47 years. In 2002 a fire destroyed over half of the temple building but not its spirit. Rebuilding took 2 years and in 2004, the rebuilding was complete and in 2005, we were able to celebrate the Fraser Valley Buddhist Temple 50th Anniversary.

This year, 2024, is our 20th anniversary for the rebuild to be completed. The president of our temple at that time wrote "again a group of people many of whom were children and grandchildren of the founders came together to restore the building. The rebuilding process was cathartic, and it enabled us to come together again as a revitalized Buddhist community."

In gratitude for all the assistance and good wishes sent to us at that time from all the temples across Canada, including the Calgary Buddhist Temple, we would like to offer this little gift to your sangha for use at your Obon in 2024. Obon is a time to remember and be grateful for our memories. We hope you will be able to give these simple handmade kanzashi to the obon dancers.

Thank you, arigato, and in gassho,

Fraser Valley Buddhist Temple (FVBT)



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CORNER

June 22 || August 9 & 10th || October 19th

Hello Sangha members!

Spring is finally here, and so is our fundraising season. I invite you to join us whenever you can to volunteer, help organize, and by donating. Fundraising activities not only raise much needed funds for the Temple but also are opportunities to contribute while meeting others and having fun together.

Garage sale: Saturday, June 22

Call out for donations: We will gratefully accept new or gently used household items, sporting goods, collectibles, and Japanese items. Due to limited space, we are unable to accept clothing, books, or large furniture. You can drop off items at the Temple every Sunday after the service between May 26 – June 16. For more information or to make alternate drop-off arrangements contact Mickey at mhkuta@outlook.com.

Save the date:

1. Omatsuri - August 9, 10 (tentative)
2. Ribs and Chow Mein Dinner- Saturday, October 19.



FALL IKEBANA CLASS

*September 21, October 5 and 20, November 2 and 16
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm*

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 cost is \$250 total including flower material and instruction for Temple members or \$300 for non-members. No refunds for missed classes.

Students must supply their own containers (please ask Rika for a suitable size and shape), scissors and kenzan (frog). Contact Rika if you need help selecting your items but these are not supplied as part of the lesson.



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

Rika's contact info: rikaandshiro@gmail.com or call 403-701-0390



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Bon Odori Practices

The Calgary Buddhist Temple Obon Service is on Sunday, July 28, so let's learn/relearn and practice Bon Odori (Japanese folk dancing) which we'll perform together after the Obon Service.

Practices will take place at the Calgary Japanese Community Association (in the basement) on:

Tuesday, June 11: 7:30-8:30pm

Tuesday, June 25: 7:30-8:30pm

Saturday, July 13: 10-11:00am

Tuesday, July 16: 7:30-8:30pm

Saturday, July 27: 10-11:00am

calgarytemplesangha@gmail.com



Address for Bon Odori Practices

2236 29 St SW, Calgary, AB T3E 2K2



PAST WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

THANK YOU - GYOZA VOLUNTEERS

Thank you very much to the volunteers who came early on Saturday, May 11 to make gyoza for our Temple fundraiser.

Volunteers brought their own knives and cutting boards and were so efficient that we had chopped veggies, filled and folded enough gyoza to fill the freezer early. We then enjoyed coffee/tea and the goodies brought by members of the Fundraising Committee. Thank you to everyone.

This year's gyoza are the best, most uniformly crafted gyoza yet. They are selling very fast. Please ask Dan M for your order on Sundays after service.





LIBRARY NEWS

Normally, the library is open on the 3rd Sunday of each month, but because service is canceled for Father's Day, the library will be open on Sunday June 23rd instead. Come downstairs and browse the books while you enjoy a cup of tea.

Kim McCormack is the new librarian. I am looking forward to meeting everyone and would greatly appreciate feedback on books, especially book recommendations that you may have. I confess that I have not read any of the books in our collection and I plan to be mainly an administrator.

For any newcomers to the temple, it is easy to join our library. For \$20.00, you get a lifetime membership.

The book loan period is 3 months. Please see me if you are interested in joining. I will be at the library anytime it is open.

If you have books on Buddhism that you would like to donate to the library, we are very grateful to accept donations!

Many thanks to Belle for her valued service! It is due to her and Masaye's efforts that the library is in the great shape that it is. Thanks also to Masaye for continuing in her role as Library Assistant.

Thanks, Kim and Masaye





APRIL DONATIONS

Canada Helps

Giggs, Melanie
Gillis, Emi
Haddon, Samantha
Howard, Leslie
In memory of Jack and Jo Howard
Jonasson, Julia

Martin, James
McCullagh, Bob
Miyanishi, Kiyoko
Robson, Tomiko
Stewart, Matthew
Stewart, Sara

Sugimoto, Laura
Sugimoto, Sumire
Waddell, Justin
Wright, Charlene
Zheng, Yifan

Temple Donations

Delisle, Yuri
Dolph, Heather
Hayashi, Debbie
in memory of Butch Hayashi
Kitagawa, Susan
Masuda, Misae
McCormmack, Dan

Miquelon, Dixie
Oresnik, John
Oshiro, Evan
Ota, Fumi
Pittman, Craig and Cathy

Robb, Barrie
Sano, Tracee
Sugimoto, Laura
Takeda, Nathan
Tanaka, Masaye
Taranik, Bryan & Charity



TEMPLE MEMBERSHIP



CALGARY BUDDHIST TEMPLE
www.calgary-buddhist.ab.ca

2024 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 (\$100 per member)
- ☐ Student (Under 18) Membership –No Charge
- ☐ Honorary Senior (65 & over) Membership
– Complimentary

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

____ by email

____ by mail

____ Please contact me regarding volunteering