

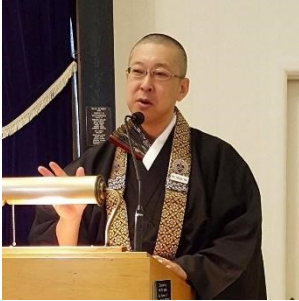
Bodhi Mind



Vancouver Buddhist Temple

June 2020, Issue #437

Cleaning as a Buddhist Path to Well-being



I wish and hope everyone is staying healthy and in peace during this difficult crisis. Although we are gradually getting back to a regular routine, many of us continue to stay at home as much as we can. Although being stuck indoors may feel frustrating, organizing your space can make you feel better and more productive. When we organize and clean, we are moving and being physical. Any type of physical exercise is known to help reduce stress, which helps improve your mental health. When you feel organized and in a clean space, it can help you feel more relaxed, your mind more refreshed to give you more clarity in your life. Cleaning is the most basic practice that all schools of Japanese Buddhism have in common. Cleaning is a form of practice, whereby we sweep, wipe, polish, wash and tidy up. This is one step on the path towards inner peace. In Japanese Buddhism, we don't separate 'self' from the environment, and cleaning expresses our respect for and gives oneness to the whole world that surrounds us. I would like to share a Buddhist parable related to 'cleaning.'

Suddhipanthaka was one of Sakyamuni's most famous disciples. He was dull by birth, unable to remember even his own name. One day Sakyamuni found him crying and asked him kindly, "Why are you so sad?"

Suddhipanthaka lamented, "Why was I born stupid?"

"Cheer up," said Sakyamuni. "You are aware of your foolishness, but there are many fools who think themselves wise. Being aware of one's stupidity is next to enlightenment."

He handed Suddhipanthaka a broom and instructed him to utter just two words while he worked. He was told to simply repeat the two words, "sweep" and "clean" over and over.

Once during those twenty years, Sakyamuni complimented Suddhipanthaka on his persistence and determination. "No matter how many years you keep sweeping, you grow no better at it, and yet that does not cause you to give up. As important as making progress is, persevering in the same endeavor is even more important. It is an admirable trait—one that I do not see in my other disciples."

In time, Suddhipanthaka realized that dust and dirt accumulated not only where he thought they would, but in places he least expected. He thought, "I knew I was stupid, but there's no knowing how much more of my stupidity exists in places I don't even notice." In the end Suddhipanthaka attained the enlightenment of an arhat, a very high stage. Besides encountering a great teacher and true teachings, it was his long years of effort and perseverance that was his crowning success.

The practice of ritualized cleaning is related to discarding illusions, ignorance and the Buddhist understanding of 'non-self'. What we view as our personalities are merely illusions created by our egos: "The characters for 'human being (人間 *Nin Gen*)' in Japanese mean 'person 人' and 'between 間.' Human being 'a person 'in between.' Thus, I as a human being exists, only through my relations with others—people such as friends, colleagues, and family. As a person, I have certain traits, facial expressions and behaviors, but these arise only through my interaction and connections with other people. This is the Buddhist concept "*en*" or "interdependence."

Namo Amida Butsu Tatsuya Aoki

Message from the VBT Board

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed all our lives in many ways, and the temple board is no exception. The board was able to conduct their May meeting through using the internet. We are still, however, unable to physically gather at the temple. During this crisis not only are we unable to carry out meetings, but we have also missed conducting services and enjoying social events at the temple. The Obon service and Bon Odori Festival annually scheduled for July will likely be cancelled for this year. As well, the services at the various cemeteries (Ohakamairi) are cancelled due to Covid-19 uncertainties.

The outbreak has thus left the temple without most of its normal revenue sources. You will read more about this in the enclosed letter, and we will remind you here as well of the various donation and payment options still available to you. Methods in place include direct payment via e-transfer to **temple.vbt@gmail.com**, or via **Paypal** on our website or at the website of **Canada Helps**. Of course, we continue to accept personal cheques through Canada Post mail services.

The temple graciously accepts any amount of money from members and friends of the temple to cover ongoing operating expenses to the temple such as utilities and city services. Projects we have considered for 2020 include additional security cameras, kitchen floor replacement and rearrangement of the gym space to attract new tenants.

As the virus outbreak in BC declines, we hope we can gather at our temple before too long. But we must be diligent and patient. In the meantime, we will strive to keep our temple accessible to members and the outside community seeking spiritual solace.

Regular Services on YOUTUBE

Rev. Aoki offers virtual services online!

You can make donations through our temple website.



SCAN ME



How To Make Donations to VBT Online

1. Paypal @ VBT Website www.vancouverbuddhisttemple.com

2. Canada Helps online donation site for charity groups

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/vancouver-buddhist-temple/>

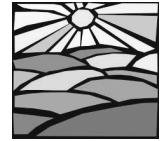
Or simply go to www.canadahelps.org and search for "Vancouver Buddhist Church"



*Services and activities at VBT are suspended
until further notice.*

Greetings from the Valley

The last time we gathered at our temple on Saturday, March 14th, we had 16 people in attendance. It was just before the complete shutdown was announced, and even by then we knew we had to follow guidelines like keeping our physical distance.



It's now over two months since our self-isolation began and although we look forward to a gradual lessening of restrictions, it may be some time before we can meet at the temple again. However, in the meantime we have found new ways to keep in touch, primarily through the internet. Now we can look forward to services on YouTube or Zoom. Through the internet we are also able to hear Dharma talks and other inspiring messages from around the world. A few months ago this new lifestyle would have been unimaginable, but after the initial shock, we are learning to adapt and be more resilient.

Stay well, be safe and let's stay connected by phone and the internet. Also, if anyone needs assistance with shopping or other important errands, please feel free to contact any of our Board members.

In Gassho,
Fraser Valley Buddhist Temple

Our Tradition —What is our Practice?

Most things in life require personal effort to achieve a goal. To become a lawyer, accountant or nurse one must study to gain the necessary knowledge and skills. In Buddhism, the goal for all followers is to seek liberation and freedom from our ignorance and blind passions.

In Jodo Shinshu, personal effort by ordinary people falls far short of the ultimate goal of complete and absolute attainment, which is enlightenment. Shantao said that the ordinary person is incapable of any practice or good deed that will culminate in Birth. In our tradition, saying the Name, "*Namo Amida Butsu*," constitutes practice. Saying *Namo Amida Butsu* becomes the light that shines upon and nurtures us from the outside. The nembutsu of itself contains all the essentials to liberate us. Hence, hearing the name becomes entrusting, and reciting becomes practice. The phrase means, "*I entrust myself to rely solely upon the Awakened One of Immeasurable Higher Wisdom and Immeasurable Compassion who has come from thusness to bring about my emancipation.*"



To rely and to entrust does not come from us; rather, it comes from Amida in its entirety. Shinran says that the word *namo* means that Amida is calling out to us even before we have entrusted ourselves to Amida. While we may not see the form of Amida Buddha, we are always enveloped by the Light and protected by it. We are liberated just as we are — with our lack of awareness and our ignorance — by the Light that continually shines upon us, allowing us to live with strength and with a deep sense of gratitude.

Gassho,
Robert Akune

From the National Board

The JSBTC Annual General Meeting was held on April 24th, by conference call. Delegates from eleven temples attended, with Montreal giving its proxy to the Toronto Buddhist Church. All JSBTC Board members were present, as well as Socho Aoki, Rev. Grant Ikuta, Rev. Gubenco, and Reverend Ouchi. Rev. Izumi and Rev. Miyakawa were unable to attend. Rev. Kiyonobu Kawarhara, from the Jodo Shinshu International Office, attended as a special guest. Despite the fact that the AGM had never been held by conference call before, it proceeded smoothly, with no technical problems.

The AGM determined that the 2021 Temple assessments will remain at \$80 per member. There has been no increase in membership fees for years. The AGM also gave the Board the power to determine whether any or all of the 2020 Member Assessments be deferred or cancelled, based on the Board's continuing review of the effects of the pandemic on the revenues of the Temples. Larry Wakisaka, Amy Wakisaka, Debra Campbell, and Harvey Kaita were reelected to the Board, while Dave Ohori was not elected.

Larry Wakisaka has stepped down after two years as President. We thank him for his dedication and hard work, not only as President but also as Vice President in preceding years. He has worked to support the Temples and the Ministers and has encouraged new ideas and expansion while encouraging greater transparency in JSBTC matters. Amy Wakisaka will be resigning as Director of the LDC this summer. Under Amy's direction, the LDC has been rejuvenated, creating a training program for ministerial assistants, supporting individuals who wish to train for tokudo and kyoshi, assisting Temples with funding for AV equipment, providing financial aid to students and Sangha members to attend courses, and helping Temples build their libraries. We will miss Amy's financial acumen and guidance as well as her devotion to the dharma, and we are very grateful to her. The Board has not yet determined how it will replace her! Larry and Amy are staying on as Directors.

The incoming Board has elected Laura Sugimoto as President, Greg Chor as Treasurer, Debra Campbell Hiyashi as Secretary, and Greg and Debra as Co-Vice Presidents.

Given the uncertainties of the coming year, it was agreed that either Steveston Buddhist Temple or the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta will be the host for the 2021 AGM, and that either the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta or Steveston Temple will be the host for the 2022 AGM.

The Women's Federation also held its annual meeting in April, via email. Re-elected for a second two year term as the leadership team are June Asano, Darlene Reiger and Myra Takahashi. Thank you for continuing in these positions during these difficult times. In addition, the WF agreed that no membership fees would be charged in 2020, and that all Dana Day funds would remain with the individual Temples to be disbursed in the local communities.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the AGM and the WF meeting. Your involvement is critical to the success of the Canadian kyodan.

DHARMA MESSAGE

There is much uncertainty as we all find ourselves in unprecedented times due to COVID-19. The worries that we harboured just a few short months ago seem to fail in comparison to what is forefront in our thoughts today. And as I listen to the daily updates from Alberta's chief medical officer of health, Dr. Deena Hinshaw, I am reminded of the seriousness of the virus that is sweeping the world. In many ways there is a helplessness associated with the pandemic because our best recourse from the virus is isolation from others. However, during the daily update Dr. Hinshaw points out that it is our collective actions that have made the difference in slowing the spread of the virus in Alberta. The words of encouragement related to our collective actions resonate that people have come together in consideration for others and the world that we live in.



Buddhism teaches that Right Action is about ethical conduct, promoting love and compassion for all living beings. It is one of the eight categories of the Path which brings one's focus inward in the attempt to develop ethical conduct to the best of our capacity. This inward focus is essential to understanding how our actions have an effect on others.

With the data surrounding the pandemic and how countries around the world have responded differently to the threat of the virus, we can see how taking the right action affects others. I am reminded by hearing the words that our collective actions, our joining together for the common good, with understanding and compassion for others, are the activity of the Sangha. The Pure Land tradition teaches that the Light of the Dharma is with us always, and it is our self-centredness that prevents us from hearing the teaching. The late Rev. K. Tsuji said it best in his poem, Listen: *"The Dharma speaks to us through the sounds of the world – forcefully and eloquently and beautifully. It speaks of the unending change around us, the immutable truth of interdependence, and the peace in nature. Do we have the ears to hear and listen...?"* In my lifetime, I have not experienced humanity taking the time to stop and listen to the sounds of the world as a collective whole in the way we are doing it today. When we have the ears to hear and listen we understand that we are interconnected with everything that supports us as members of a Sangha. Although these are difficult times, I feel that we are truly blessed with being embraced by the Light of the Dharma.

I would like to share with you a little quarantine humor that I received, and hopefully it brings a chuckle to your day as it did for me.

"Kinda starting to understand why pets try to run out of the house when the door opens."

Namo Amida Butsu, Rev. Robert Gubenco (Calgary Buddhist Temple)

Gingolx Japanese Canadian Memorial

The BC Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple Federation (BCJSBTF) is joining with the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC), the Nikkei Museum, and the Nisga'a First Nation to promote interest in and seek information about Japanese graves and a memorial obelisk at Kincolith (Gingolx), BC.

The obelisk and adjacent Japanese graves located in the cemetery of Kincolith, B.C. (now a part of the Nisga'a First Nations Gingolx Village) were discovered in September, 1995 by archeologist Dr. Richard Garvin of the University College of the Cariboo (now David Thompson University). Subsequently, this discovery was reported to the Nikkei National Museum in Burnaby, B.C. by Dr. Garvin. As Dr. Garvin noted, it is not a surprise that there was a Japanese



Canadian community located in this area because there were at least eight salmon canneries located at the mouth of the Nass River from 1890 to 1950, and it was known that families from Steveston would travel up to the Nass river canneries for temporary summer employment.

He was surprised, however, by the 1.5 metre high granite obelisk. The three sides of the obelisk are engraved with Japanese characters which translate as: *Namu Amida Butsu* on the south side, *Dedicated by the Nass River Branch of the Japanese Association; erected in Taisho, Year 7, June* on the east side, and *A Monument to the Victims of Drowning and the Brave Soldiers who Died in the War* on the west side. "Taisho, Year Seven" dates the Obelisk to 1918, which is two years earlier than the Japanese Canadian war memorial in Stanley Park, Vancouver. Dr. Gavin commented that the Nass River Branch of the Japanese Association must have been well

organized and with significant resources to enable them to erect such an impressive monument.

After reading about the discovery of the monument in the Nikkei Bulletin, Roy Akune Sensei followed up with Irene Kawamoto Reid, the curator at the Nikkei National Museum, which led to a meeting with Ms. Reid, Rev. Grant Ikuta and Roy Akune Sensei, and which in turn led to a broader discussion with the NAJC (Irene Kusada, who lives in Terrace), and the BCJSBTF. Roy Akune Sensei then contacted the Nisga'a First Nations asking about visiting the site and performing a memorial service there. The Chief Administrative Officer of the Gingolx Village Government responded positively, inviting the ad hoc group to visit the Nisga'a community and to recognize and honour the Japanese Canadian deceased. Because of the current pandemic, plans to respond have been curtailed. It is expected, however, that in the near future Jodo Shinshu followers and friends will be able to engage with them.

In discussing the history of the Japanese Canadians in this area, Roy Sensei said that he knows that Japanese Canadian fishermen from Steveston established a camp at the head of Nass River during the fishing season, usually June to September. Most would return to Steveston in the off-season. It is possible that some may have set up permanent homes in the area, but that seems unlikely since the area was so remote. The boat trip from Prince Rupert to this location can take 12 hours. Roy Sensei wondered if the obelisk was built in Prince Rupert and shipped to Kincolith. He also wondered if some of the families who lived in Prince Rupert had information about the Skeena Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple. He has attempted to trace the history of the Skeena Temple, which burned down. He could not find anything other than a reference to a Mr. Sakamoto of Lethbridge, who is now deceased.



The ad hoc group hopes that they will be able to plan a trip to the Gingolx cemetery at Obon time, to conduct a memorial service and to share Buddhist information and get an understanding of the Nisga'a culture and the relationship between the Nisga'a and the Japanese Canadians who fished and lived in the area. While it is very unlikely that a trip will take place this year, hopefully something can be planned for 2021.

If your family has any historical information or links to this area, please contact Roy Akune Sensei at the Steveston Buddhist Temple or through email at royakune@gmail.com.

ONLINE SERVICES INFORMATION

BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

Some services are being live streamed on **Facebook**.

Dr. Roland Ikuta (President, BTSA) has posted a series of ten short videos, “**10 Things to do to cope with COVID-19.**” The videos can be found on the BTSA **Facebook** page.

BTSA **Facebook**: <https://www.facebook.com/BuddhistTempleOfSouthernAlberta>

CALGARY

Sensei Robert is live streaming a **daily evening service starting at 9:00 pm MDT** using Facebook Live from the group: [Calgary](#)

[Buddhist Temple Group on Facebook](#) The Temple holds regular online **Sunday Services** starting at 10:00 am MDT by streaming using Facebook Live from the group: [Calgary Buddhist Temple Group on Facebook](#). If you're not a member of the group, you may need to request to be added to the group before you'll be able to share in the service.

You can also view **Sunday Services** on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtWoVjcCo2o98KL_EWF8wrg

STEVESTON

Rev. Grant is holding a **Zoom** service every Sunday morning at 10:00 am PDT.

To receive an invitation to participate in the **Zoom** call and receive reminders, email: info@steveston-temple.ca

Website: <http://steveston-temple.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Steveston-Buddhist-Temple-136413149761882/>

VANCOUVER

Rev. Aoki is uploading regular Dharma messages to YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_-Gw4NTDSEjB9Skua6TMLg

BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

<https://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org>

HAWAII HONGWANJI TEMPLES

<https://hongwanjihawaii.com>



June Shotsuki (Memorial) List

For those who would like to have private funeral and memorial services, please contact Rev. Aoki.

1959

*YAMAMOTO, Koshichi

1961

*HIRAKIDA, Chiyoko

MUKUYAMA, Sueko

1962

*KAWAGUCHI, Yoshigoro

1963

*UI, Kenny

*YAMASHITA, Manjiro

1964

*TAKEUCHI, Tomiye

1965

*HUDSON, Irene

1967

*INOUE, Kazuo

NAKAMURA, Rie

1968

*FURUKAWA, Kumakichi

KASUYA, Toyonari

*NODA, Sueno

YADA, Kamen

1969

*HIKIDA, Yazaemon

1970

KANEKO, Shojiro

*MIYAGAWA, Ume

*ONO, Yosojiro

1971 (50th Year)

*TABATA, Heizo

1972

*KONO, Nobue

*MAYEDA, Miyuki

*OHARA, Jo

1973

TAGUCHI, Sowa

1974

SAKAI, Tokuzo

*YAMAKE, Junzo

KASHIYAMA, Sumi

1975

*MORITA, Hiroshi

*SUGIYAMA, Yusaku

*WADA, Tsuneko

1976

KOBAYASHI, Kanzaburo

1977

*DOI, Yojiro

*HIRAYAMA, Shigeru

*YUDA, Chiwako

1978

*LEE, Shion

*MITSUI, Miyako

*NAGANO, Kazuichi

*SHINTANI, Kuni

1979

HARA, Shinichi

*KOZAI, Kiri

1981

*HORI, Tadao

WAKAHARA, Haru

1982

*MAYEDA, Hatsu

1983

*TANII, Kichiji

TERANISHI, Masuye

1985

*IWANAKA, Motoi

KARAKI, Hideaki

*KUMAMOTO, Jun

NISHIGUCHI, Waku

1986

NAKAMURA, Kamen

*TANIGUCHI, Juntaro

*TANIZAWA, Shige

UYENO, Yukio

SHIKAZE, Yoshio

1987

FUJIWARA, Katsu

KURAHASHI, Setsuko

MATSUTANI, Itono

1988 (33rd Year)

*SHIMIZU, Kaneyoshi

1990

*FUJII, Kazuko

1991

*SATO, Hideo

*MOTOMOCHI, Yoshiko

*YOSHIDA, Teichi

1992

EGAMI, Kimiye

*HAMANISHI, Takeo

*KAWAMOTO, Itoye

KUMANO, Asae

*KURAHASHI, Hisako

*NARIWA, Masahiro

*TANAKA, Mizuo

1993

MORISHITA, Teiji

MURATA, Yoshikazu

*YOSHIDA, Alvin

1994

*TAKUBO, Hisao

*FUJITA, Yasuyoshi

1995

INOUE, Tsutomu

ITO, Misao

WAKABAYASHI, Mitsuye

YAKURA, Yukinobu

YANO, Matsuyo

YANASE, Katsuhiko

KOBAYASHI, Hiroko

1996 (25th Year)

SHIMIZU, Aiko

1997

*KANAYAMA, Shoichi

UYEDA, Miki

UYENO, Sumio

SHIKAZE, Eda

1998

HAMAZAKI, Kazuko

ODA, Masato

TANAKA, Yoshi

1999

MIYAGAWA, Sutekichi

NAKAGAWA, Yoshio

2000

KAZUTA, Kiyozo

2001

KOJIMA, Marge

SHIMABUKURO, Nellie

IWATA, Robert

2002

*ASAOA, George

NAKAHARA, Ryosuke

2003

FUJITA, Chizuko

SOGA, Tsuneko

GOMYO, Yoshiaki

2004 (17th Year)

SAKAMOTO,

SHIGEKO, Helen

HIRAKIDA, Margaret

2005

FUKUMOTO, Toshiyuki

HAMA, Shizue

*FUKUDA, Yoshiko

MATSUNAGA, Toshiko

HIQUEBRAN, Harumi

HIQUEBRAN, Jimmy

HIROSHI, James

MATSUNAGA, Masami

2006

BANDO, Hatsu

ISHINO, Masahiko

2007

WADA, Osamu

2008 (13th Year)

SHIMIZU, Chiyomi

KISHIDA, Akira

2009

MATSUMOTO, Yoshiaki

SUGA, Kanji

SUZUKI, Yukiko

2010

URATA, Michiho

2011

TAMURA, Misao

KIKUCHI, Megumi

2012

TODA, Miyo

KUBO, Yoshiko

MORI, Takao

2013

OKUYAMA, Yasuo

UEDA, Fumiaki

SAKAMOTO, Fujie

2015 (7th Year)

OTAKI, Hiromi

TSUJI, Nobuo

2016

HOTTA, Shigeo

YAMAMOTO, Yoshino

MIYASHITA, Tsugi

ONO, Misao

TATEYAMA, Joe

2017

TOMITA, Hozumi

WATANABE, Kyoko

2018 (3rd Year)

UTSUNOMIYA, Seiichi

2019 (1st year)

HAMAGUCHI, Yuji

NOSE, Miyoko

