

QUARTERLY CONNECTION

Winter edition
2023

President's Message

The practice of gratitude. I find myself thinking of this precept of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism more and more as we near the end of 2023.

We all have much to be grateful for. Family, friends, and other loved ones. Good health, good fortune, and opportunities. As much as the world has changed since the start of 2020, many core things remain the same.

Amidst all of the changes, TS/DBT remains a constant in our lives. A place filled with friendship, peace, and the teachings of the Buddha. As the year closes, I am grateful for each person who contributes to our Sangha, through their attendance at Sunday Services, through their volunteer efforts, through their dedication of their time, money, and efforts. All of that is at the core of our Sangha.

Resuming what used to be long ingrained habits—from volunteering at Temple events to bringing items for bake sale to attending special services—takes time, commitment, and conscious decision-making. I ask that each of you make that decision, that you reach out and encourage family and friends to make that same decision, and to see how you can contribute to the growth and continued vitality of our Sangha.

I am proud that we often see four generations of families at Sunday Services. That is a special legacy that not all churches can claim. TS/DBT is an amazing place and we should work hard to share it with others. The world continues to be challenging, divisive, and full of conflict. Through our efforts, and the efforts of everyone around us, we can make TS/DBT a respite from that storm. I look forward to seeing all of you each Sunday (and to seeing new faces and making new friends).

The path of gratitude. Please close the year by looking back, recognizing all that we have to be thankful for, and remembering to be grateful in both word and deed.

TS/DBT President Chad Nitta



Rev. Thompson's message

Hello everyone! We have come yet again to the end of another year, a time of reflection and aspiration. We consider what has happened over the past year and try to inventory everything. What did I do? Did I spend enough time with friends and family? Who did I meet? And, most importantly, what did I learn? No matter how our years have gone, we tend to look towards the new year with the hope that the coming year will be better than the last. This is not an unreasonable expectation. As people, we want things to be comfortable and pleasurable and if they can be more so than they were before, all the better! However, in our reflections, we must look at all aspects of the year. All things, people and experiences are part of who we have been, who we are now, and who we will become. We cannot keep the 'good' and discard the 'bad' because we need both in order to understand our lives and learn from them.

Rev. George Shibata wrote "We have the tendency as human beings to ignore our past if there are no fond memories remaining. Instead of using the past as part of our learning experience, we place the past on a bookshelf like a book we don't like, only to discard it later." Again, we cannot ignore the parts of life that we don't or didn't like. We can learn from difficulties and will hopefully also grow from them.

Life itself gives us the opportunity to reflect on and try to understand the truths of impermanence and interdependence. Good, bad or neutral, all things will eventually pass and while we are happy to see the bad pass, we must remember that the good will also pass. In understanding this impermanence, we become able to face what comes with a sense of equanimity. We learn to appreciate the precious moments when we are happy or content and to take comfort in the fact that our difficult moments will not last forever. Also, all of these things from moment to moment are connected to one another and each piece is necessary to create the complex fabric of our human lives.

We can look into the past and ahead to the future at the same time and see, with joy and wonder, the vast connection and precious, fleeting nature of all life. As this year comes to a close, we should definitely reflect on this and try to go into this next year with a sense of renewed gratitude. Gratitude for this life and all of its complexities and gratitude for the chance for another year of learning, changing and growing. Namu Amida Butsu



Sunshine trip 2023 ~ I am a link ~

The YBA (Young Buddhist Association) has officially embarked on this year's Sunshine Trip. Through this trip the Denver YBA had the opportunity to engage with other YBA groups throughout the U.S. This year, they visited 10 temples, the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, and attended two different Obon festivals, all while forming lifelong connections with other young Buddhists along the way. Thank you again to our amazing Sangha for helping us reach our fundraising goal and for supporting our efforts!





Obon festival 2023

This year's Obon festival was held on August 5 2023. There were a large number of people who participated in the traditional Bon dancing.

Thanks to the folks who did the setup, Drew Matsushima for doing the MC, the Minyo group who led the Bon dance, BDK Amercia for donating the Japanese fans and all those who participated in the festival.

Interfaith Thanksgiving service

This years Interfaith Thanksgiving service was held on November 23 at the Temple Emmanuel in Denver. Denver's Interfaith Service of Thanksgiving is one of the oldest continuous interfaith partnerships in the country. Since the first service was held in 1876, it has welcomed new partners of different faiths so that today we have participants from Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Unitarian expressions of faith.



Minister Assistants

On September 17, Nicholas Tanaka and Jeffery Mizell were appointed as Denver Buddhist Temple's Local Minister assistants.



End of year Hondo Clean up

The hondo was vacuummed, mopped and the elements on the Naijin (Altar) were polished on December 17. Thanks to Joyce, Lesli, Wendy, Sue, Mabel, Ann, Debbie, Rob, Shelly and Minister assitant Nick.



Mochi making

We had our Mochi making on December 23 lead by the YBA.





Dharma school message

Dharma School is off and running for the 2023-2024 school year. Thank you to our volunteer teachers: Sue Yoshimura and Alyssa deMars (Preschool), Brandi Tsuchimoto and Anna Tsuchimoto (K-2), River Mizell (4th-6th) and Craig Hirokawa and Sarah Pettis (YBA Advisors) for all of the time and energy they pour into teaching our kids. Also, a big thank you to Mariko & Matt Kerns and Justin Lo for helping out with all the dharma school side projects, like the bulletin board and cleaning out the gym closet!

A huge shoutout to everyone who helped make this year's Turkey Bingo a major success: Wayne Berve and Kyle & Koji Inouye woke up early to fry the turkeys. The YBA cooked the rest of the delicious lunch. The choir, Karaoke Club, Judo, Minyokai, Aikido, Volleyball, Nitta Family, Gargan Family, Kimura Family, BDA, Sakura Foundation and Robert (our favorite security guard) all donated turkeys and prizes. Chad Nitta called the winning (or losing) bingo numbers. Aiko Kimura, Joyce Nakata-Kim and Kevin Yoshida manned the pickles sales. Justin Lo and June Kurobane sold raffle tickets. Cindy Horiuchi, Sue Yoshimura, Stacey Ospina and Amy Nitta made sure you had your bingo cards ready. Carole Eshima managed the finances and Zachary Umetani ensured it was all bingo license compliant. We had the largest number of raffle prizes we have had to date thanks to the many generous donors: Denver Taiko, Clarynne Blanchard, Shirley Tsuchimoto, Alison Furuya, Lorraine Hisamoto, Gayle Goto, K-1st grade class, Shannon Tanino, Shino Neima, Joni Sakaguchi and Kerns Family. There are many other people who helped set up, cleaned up after the event, and otherwise pitched in wherever needed. Turkey Bingo wouldn't happen without you and the Dharma School is truly grateful for everyone's efforts.

We're looking forward to more fun events in the new year. Save the date for the Colfax Marathon on Sunday, May 19th. Dharma School has one relay team of runners already registered. If you're interested in getting in on the fun, let Shannon Umetani (shannonumetani@gmail.com) know.

Stevie & Shannon



BWA/BDA message

The Buddhist Dana Association organized and participated in our first Dana project with the Dharma School Students. We held a food drive through October and November to benefit Metro Caring, a non-profit food bank serving the metro area. Metro Caring provides fresh, healthy food and other items for free in a grocery-store-style market. No identification, proof of need, or documentation is needed. They provide 10,000 lbs. of food every day to the community. We asked everyone to bring in donations and had great support from the Sangha. The Dharma School Students bagged rice and beans into smaller, manageable portions. They sorted the supplies and hygiene products too. We delivered the donations to Metro Caring at the end of November, which will help replenish their shelves after the busy holiday season. No person or family should have food insecurities and this Dana Project was a wonderful way for our Sangha to help those who are in need. Thank you to everyone who donated and helped, it was a great success!



METRO CARING

ENDING HUNGER AT ITS ROOT
TERMINAR LAS CAUSAS PROFUNDAS DEL HAMBRE

EST.  1974

Upcoming special services and events

December 31 at 7 pm - New Years Eve service

January 1 at 11 am - New Years service

January 21 at 9:30 am - Ho-onko (Memorial day of Shinran Shonin) service

January 27 - Kohaku Uta Gassen (Red and White team singing contest)

February 18 at 9:30 am - Family Pet Memorial service

10:15 am - Nirvana service

March 3 at 9:30 am - Combined Family & Adult service

After service - Temple Clean up

March 17 at 9:30 am - Family Ohigan (Spring Equinox) service

10:15 am - Adult Ohigan service

April 7 at 10 am - Joint Hanamatsuri (Birth of the Buddha) service

April 21 at 9:30 am - Hatsumairi (Children's first visit to temple) service

May 19 at 9:30 am - Family Gotan-E (Birth of Shinran Shonin) service

10:15 am - Adult Gotan-E service

June 22 and 23 - Cherry Blossom Festival

****The dates and time are subject to change***

What's new ?

On February 7th 2024, we will be starting online Buddhist study classes. We will have various lectures, discussions and study opportunities. This space is designed to be open to everyone regardless of nationality, gender, and belief. For the schedule, details, and Zoom link please email us at info@tsdbt.org. We hope to see you all there.

Rev. Hayashi's Japanese Dharma message

今年も残りわずかとなりました。2024年はもうすぐそこです。
皆様の2023年はいかがでしたでしょうか。嬉しかったこと、悲しかったこと、腹が立ったこと、驚いたことなど様々なことが起こったことでしょう。
新しい年を迎えるにあたって思う言葉があります。それは蓮如上人の「仏法は何度聞いても、いつも初めて聞くような気持ちで聞くべきである」というものです。

様々な経験を積み、その積まれた経験に頼る私たちは、経験の数だけ初心から遠ざかってしまいます。そしてだんだんと無意識のうちに「慣れ」が姿を表し、「謙虚さ」が身を隠してしまいます。ついには人より知識がある、人より偉いという傲慢さがでてきます。
それを見抜いて、蓮如上人は謙虚さ、真剣さの重要性を訴えられました。蓮如上人のこのお心は、親鸞聖人の姿勢からも伺い知ることができます。

歎異抄という本の中に「親鸞は弟子一人ももたずそうろう」とあります。これは常にありがたいと拝まれ、お念仏の指導者として見られた身でありながらも、様々な争いを生みかねない「師弟関係」を嫌い、集団の中において、あくまでもみんな御同朋（志を同じくする友）御同行（共に生きる念仏者）であると言われた親鸞聖人の謙虚な姿勢を表すものです。
しかし、謙虚になると一言で言うのは簡単ですが、実際そうあるのは難しいことです。

では「謙虚な姿勢」とは一体どういうことなのでしょう。
それを考えた時に、以前私が出会った書籍、パナソニック創始者である松下幸之助氏の著書で「素直な心になるためには」という本の中の一部にヒントがありました。

まつしたし けんきょ ころ すなお ころ おな い み も すなお しぜん
 松下氏はまず謙虚な心と素直な心は同じ意味を持ち、素直でいれば自然と
 けんきょ
 謙虚さにつながるのだと言います。その中で素直・謙虚になるための「3
 ころえ
 つの心得」というものをご紹介します。

ひと なにごと たい みみ かたむ ころ
 一つに「何事に対しても耳を傾ける心」

ふた すべ たい まな ころ せつ なに え ころ
 二つに「全てに対し学ぶ心で接し、そこから何かを得ようとする心」

みつ かち みみ かたむ ころ だけ みと ころ
 三つに「価値あるものはその価値を正しく認める心」

まつしたし わたしたち ひとりひとり たが ささ い
 松下氏は、私達一人一人が互いに支えられて生きているということを
 じかく うえ あいて はなし みみ かたむ あいて まな あいて
 自覚した上で、相手の話にしっかりと耳を傾け、相手から学び、相手の
 かち みいだ じゅうよう のべ
 価値を見出すことが重要だと述べられています。

みつ ころえ げんてん あいて おな めせん た
 この三つの心得の原点には、まず相手と同じ目線に立たなければならない
 あいて うえ た あいて かち
 ということがあります。つまり、相手より上に立とうとすれば相手の価値
 みいだ
 を見出せなくなるだけでなく、耳を傾けることすらできません。

まつしたし みかた しんらんしょうにん しせい に おも
 この松下氏の見方は、親鸞聖人の姿勢に似ているものがあると思います。
 しんらんしょうにん しどうしゃ たちば だれ たい おな めせん よ そ
 親鸞聖人は指導者という立場でなく、誰に対しても同じ目線で寄り添い、
 ひとびと みみ かたむ いのち びょうどうせい つた
 人々に耳を傾け、命の平等性を伝えられました。

でんどうしせい おお ひとびと ねんぶつ おし きにゆう げんだい
 この伝道姿勢こそが多くの人々をお念仏の教えに帰入させ、現代において
 おし ひろ う い ひと よういん
 もその教えが広く受け入れられている一つの要因です。

おし なかみ おし つた ひと しせい ひじょう
 つまり、教えの中身もさながらも、その教えを伝える人の姿勢も非常に
 たいせつ い しごと たちば
 大切であると言えます。このことは、どのような仕事、どのような立場、
 じょうきょう い
 どのような状況においても言えることです。

あたら とし むか いまいちど けんきょ ころ おんどうほう おんどうぎょう
 新しい年を迎えるにあたって、今一度、謙虚な心、そして御同朋・御同行
 ころ も たいせつ あらた かんが
 の心を持つ大切さを改めて考えたいものです。

しんらん かい にっぽん ご ほうぎ ようす
親鸞の会 (日本語法座) の様子



まいつきだいいちもくようび てら にっぽん ご ほうわかい おこ
毎月第一木曜日にお寺で日本語法話会を行なっております。

どうぞ可能な方はお寺に足を運んでください。
かのう かた てら あし はこ

ちなみにこの法話会はオンラインでも参拝できます。
ほうわかい さんばい

Zoom linkをご希望な方はinfo@tsdbt.orgまでメールにてお問い合わせください。
きぼう かた と あ

Pictures were provided by

Richard Yoshida, Stieve Lo, Alison Furuya and Shino Neima

We will be publishing our temple Newsletter quarterly.
If you would like to add your event or submit images
please email info@tsdbt.org.