

2014 JSBTC Day Message

The first recorded assembly of Japanese Buddhists in Canada took place in Vancouver in 1904. Fourteen

Buddhists met to request a minister from Nishi Hongwanji (our head temple), in Kyoto, Japan. Rev. Senju Sasaki was appointed to be a *kaikyoshi* (overseas minister) to Canada in 1905. With the minister's arrival, the Buddhists formed the Vancouver Nihon Bukkyokai (Japanese Buddhist Association). The Nihon Bukkyokai was overseen by the headquarters of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) in San Francisco. In 1932, the Canadian body requested its independence. In 1955, a national conference of Japanese Buddhists was held in Toronto, and the Buddhist Churches of Canada (BCC) arose from that meeting. The BCC celebrated its centennial in 2005, and at the National Annual General Meeting in 2007, we decided to change our name to Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC).

When I look back on the history of our organization, it has been one of change. There were many endings and new beginnings. There were many partings and new meetings. The changes have been many. As Buddhists, we know well that this is the nature of Life.

The person who made Shin Buddhism the largest and most influential denomination in Japanese Buddhism is Rennyo (1415-1497), the eighth generation successor to the founder Shinran (1173-1263).

He emphasized personal awareness and faith (*shinjin*) in the Jodo Shinshu teaching as being crucial factors in the growth of the tradition. As a consequence of his encouragement, Jodo Shinshu Buddhism became the largest and most influential Japanese Buddhist School. Rennyo stressed that individual, personal awareness was the most crucial factor:

“The prosperity of a religion is not determined by the number of believers it gathers, nor by the impressiveness of its religious rituals. Even if only one person awakens to the compassion of Amida Buddha and experiences true entrusting (*shinjin*), that determines the success of the teaching.”

Our temples are a place where people come to hear and learn about the Dharma. According to Rennyo, what is crucial is that each member deepens his or her commitment by deep hearing, open discussion, and applying the teaching to one's daily life.

On this occasion of acknowledging 2014 JSBTC Day, may we rediscover joy by listening to the Dharma as we walk the path of the Nembutsu together.

Namo Amida Butsu

Tatsuya Aoki

Bishop of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada

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Another JSBTC Day Message

Greetings to all for JSBTC Day!

Jodo Shinshu or Shin Buddhism in Canada is facing a major challenge as we change from primarily serving the spiritual and religious needs of ethnic and cultural Japanese Canadians to aspiring to serve those needs for a broader spectrum of people in Canada. **Impermanence** is a fundamental teaching in Buddhism so we are equipped for it. We know that change is inevitable and we may not enjoy it but our suffering will be eased when we embrace it as part of life.

The Buddhist analogy of the finger pointing at the moon is often applied with the teachings and teachers as the finger and the Truth (or Dharma) as the Moon. It is again relevant now as we see much evidence of the change in our Sangha whether it is positive, negative or neither. For example:

- ◆ Declining Temple Membership and Attendance
- ◆ Loss of our pioneer teachers Reverend Kyojo Ikuta and Reverend Dr. Leslie Kawamura
- ◆ Installation of the young Socho Tatsuya Aoki as Shared Bishop
- ◆ Assessments increased by \$5
- ◆ New young Ministers installed at Toronto Buddhist Church
- ◆ Consolidation of Temples in Southern Alberta
- ◆ Increased presence of Minister Assistants
- ◆ Shortage of donations
- ◆ Fewer volunteers to keep programs running
- ◆ Aging population of membership

Our Buddhist backgrounds position us well to expand our awareness and sample the truth in amongst all the noise. Let's all work together on the positives, stop agonizing about the finger and embrace what we are at the moment. As Shin Buddhists, we are all fortunate to have access to this wonderful teaching that embraces all. There are others out there that don't know about this path to spirituality and awakening and are searching. Anything we do to develop our own understanding and share our delight in this path goes a step further to expose others to this teaching. We have the opportunity to learn how to share the teachings and help others choose their paths to awakening.

All of us appreciate the continued efforts of the local temples to serve the needs of our founding membership. At the JSBTC, your Board of Directors and Bishop Tatsuya Aoki are putting energy into the Living Dharma Centre (LDC) to support development of programs that broaden access to Shin Buddhist teachings to a wider audience in Canada. The LDC is a virtual team of Shin Buddhist enthusiasts who lead and participate in projects and programs to enhance the accessibility of the Teachings to everyone.

One project that is meant to reach outside of our cultural heritage is to have people write stories about how they encountered "Shin Buddhism and a Life of Gratitude". The stories will be placed on the national www.livingdharmacentre.ca website and will direct visitors to local temple websites and contacts. If you have an idea for a project you would like to lead or would like to find out what projects you can volunteer for, please contact Amy or Brenda (wakisaka.a@gmail.com or brenda.ikuta63@gmail.com) for more information.

Whether you get involved or not, we are all **interconnected** and we are grateful for your generous donations and efforts and for the opportunity and responsibility our founding members have given us.

*Living in the Dharma with Gratitude
on behalf of the Board of the JSBTC
Greg Chor*



Rev. Yanko's Message

This month I was chatting with Pamela Yoshida in the office, and for some reason started showing her pictures of my family. I can't even remember how it started. One of the pictures I showed her was of my father. You know, for a long time I have forgotten about him, and seeing him brought up some interesting feelings that I didn't know I had. It made me aware of a new piece of me that I was not paying attention to.

My parents divorced when I was only two, and I only saw my father in the summer. He was usually intoxicated. This behavior was not a hobby or something he probably even enjoyed. It was a given. And after years of substance abuse, it started to affect his mind. I don't want to go into too much detail, but just trust me when I say he was not all that nice. Eventually as I got older I realized nobody had the right to treat me that way, and I completely cut off contact. I think it has been about 15 years since I have heard his voice. My husband has not met him. My son has not and will not meet him either.

For a long time I felt hatred for him. The memories I had were always the ones where he did something terrible. Even mentioning him would bring a snarl to my lips. If one of my relatives asked if I had heard from him I would pounce. How dare they even think I should talk to him after everything.

When I was studying in Berkeley, I was talking with Rev. Yamaoka about gratitude. I said I didn't think it made sense for me to have to have gratitude for everyone, and that some people did not deserve my gratitude. He tried to coax something from me...gratitude for genetics even, but I pointed out he did not deserve even that because I inherited his quick temper. I think finally Rev. Yamaoka got me to find one thing I was grateful for. My dad was smart. Before being swallowed by his alcoholism, he was studying physics in University, and he was really good. I don't know if I really felt it or if I just wanted Rev. Yamaoka to give up...but Sensei succeeded in his goal...he did plant the seed. Was my dad really the evil incarnate I made him out to be? Is anyone?

Throughout most of my life I held onto this deep loathing. It was locked in there. Someone's father would pass away and I would actually wish mine would have died instead. In some weird way, I was able to take comfort in my hatred. It was safe for me to hold onto it and was something I could always count on. Then Rev. Yamaoka had to go and tap a tiny little crack in my armour.

I don't know when it happened. It had not even occurred to me it was happening until I saw his picture, but at some point I let go of this feeling. When I saw his picture I felt sympathy because, albeit a 10 year old picture, I could see the effects drinking had on his body. I could see a man standing there who lost everything. All of his family, his children, his career, everything. I felt sad for him. Suddenly he was no longer some alien "other" completely separate from me, but a person who has feelings and while he caused a lot of suffering, in the end most of it was to himself. Now I remember some of the better times too, like standing on his feet dancing and ridiculous words he would make up for Scrabble.

The Buddha said "the instant we feel anger we have already ceased striving for the truth, and have begun striving for ourselves." Anger and hatred are difficult to battle. There is an aspect of them that even feels good, makes us believe we are powerful.

In reality, the strongest armour we can wear is none at all.



STORIES FROM THE PRESIDENT: JOE

I think we all have or had at least one Joe in our lives. Some are ordinary Joes, most likely in their own eyes, while others are more celebrated.

For starters, since I grew my hair back a little while ago, there is Joe the Barber, who at my age and stage charges me too much, but his chair feels comfortable, he trims my rampaging eyebrows even when I protest, and according to my wife he does a decent job considering what he has to work with. I almost like this Joe.

For the legendary songwriter Paul Simon, there was Joe DiMaggio, about whom he wrote: “Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio, our nation turns its lonely eyes to you...”.

Then there was THE Joe of the 1993 World Series whom the entire Canadian nation instantly hoisted on its collective shoulder and cheered wildly when he hit his never-to-be-forgotten home run.

There are lots of Joes in my life. None of them ever got written up in the papers and while each one of them knows who he is, he probably is not aware of how much he influenced my life in so many subtle ways. Thank you.

There is one Joe in particular I want to write about here. I first met him in 1948. My father had just arrived in Toronto during the great migration from the West, wife and four little kids in tow, broke, few belongings and looking for a home. By some miracle, Pop was able to find us shelter at Joe’s parents’ house. That day in 1948, with all of his family and possessions bunched behind him, he knocked on the front door of Joe’s house. At that moment, Joe and I connected.

Things were different in 1948. At Joe’s house, there was no freshly-painted, fully-furnished apartment with its own entrance. The house was already fully occupied by Joe and his family and there really was no space, especially for our family of six. My bed was laid out on the basement floor right by the coal bin. No matter – to me it was the penthouse suite at the Four Seasons. I felt warm and safe – it was home.

Joe and his family opened their house to us. No matter that they had little to give; they shared everything they had for over a year. Every moment of every day, they lived the Golden Chain – “We will be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than ourselves.”

I would have been happy to stay there forever but the time came when our family had to stake our own ground. Along the way, I lost track of Joe and his family and went on to make other connections, some of whom steered me astray.

Fast forward to 2013. I returned to the Temple where I ran into Joe once more. By coincidence, I had some opportunities to work side-by-side with him, and there I found him still invisibly devoting his time and skill for the betterment of the Temple. He toiled silently and he stubbornly refused any recognition or reward. Ordinary Joe as always.

This story is not just about the Joes in our lives. It is about recognizing our interdependence and interconnectedness with everyone and everything. Wiser than his years, Joe knew all about this as a boy of no more than 11 in 1948. 65 years later, he was still connecting by example with others at the Temple. If it is really true that I am the sum total of all that I have encountered, Joe stands large in the hodgepodge which has been my life.

Osewa... I owe you. Thank you.
Roy Kusano

PS. This may bring to mind stories of your own Joes. It will be really nice if you could share them.



Perpetual Memorial Service, or Eitaikyo November 16, 2014

Please join us on November 16th for our special Eitaikyo service. This is a service dedicated to all those who lived and died as Buddhists and gives us an opportunity to honour their contributions to the growth of the local sangha. 'Eitai' means 'forever' and 'kyo' means 'teaching.' While this is a perpetual memorial, it is also a perpetual teaching. Those who have contributed to help our temple are why we can get together here today.

Those who are working hard right now volunteering and dedicating their time and efforts to support this temple are working towards teaching Buddhism to future generations.

During the Eitaikyo Service we bring out a book we have in the back, called the Eitaikyo Record. Inside are names of people dating back to the founding of our temple. Families or friends can request their loved one's name (alive or deceased) be placed in the Eitaikyo Record, where they will forever be recognized as someone who was devoted to our Temple.

If someone you love, or even yourself, are moving away but would like to maintain a connection with the Temple, having your name entered into the Eitaikyo Record is a nice way of remaining part of the Temple, even though you are not physically here.

One additional aspect of the Eitaikyo Record that most people are not aware of: behind the Onaijin is a smaller Butsudan that holds the Record. Almost every day (if there is a minister on site) a special service is performed at this location specifically to honour those who are listed inside.

If you are interested in putting your name or the name of your loved one into the Temple's Eitaikyo Record Book, please notify one of the ministers or contact the office at 416-534-4302.



2014 MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Our drive for 2014 memberships has started to sag recently, but we continue to hope that our final membership tally for 2014 will be much better than last year. We emphasize again that membership runs **annually** from January to December and therefore we really urge you to remember to renew your memberships at the beginning of each year. Please remember too that the Temple no longer has a "pledge" system of membership, although the membership dues of minimum \$100 may be paid in instalments so long as payments are specifically designated as membership instalments. As for Honorary Members, while they do not have to pay any membership dues, they are also encouraged to renew their memberships by submitting the proper forms to the Temple office early in the new year.

Your membership means that you subscribe to what the Temple is all about, and that you commit yourself to the Dharma and the Sangha of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in our community. It also serves as an important endorsement to our management and volunteers that you recognize their tireless efforts on your behalf.

I want to remind you that our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 30, 2014. At this meeting members who have signed up for 2014 membership will have the opportunity to elect their Board of Directors and to express their opinions about the future of our great Temple. A formal Notice of Annual General Meeting appears in the October Guiding Light. Please make sure you join us.

OBITUARIES

The Toronto Buddhist Church wishes to extend its deepest condolences to the families, relatives and friends of the following individuals who have passed away during the past month.

Mr. Kaoru Jack Nasu	(91 yrs)	Aug., 25, 2014
Mrs. Shirley Fujino	(82 yrs)	Sept., 5, 2014
Mr. Kazuharu Tsuchida	(83 yrs)	Sept., 8, 2014
Mr. Shinichi Fred Tsuji	(95 yrs)	Sept., 17, 2014

Mr. Shigeo Sid Kondo	(92 yrs)	Aug., 29, 2014
Mrs. Kimie Hara	(90 yrs)	Sept., 4, 2014
Mr. Tadao Ted Kondo	(89 yrs)	Sept., 14, 2014



Rally Sunday and Ken Tanaka

This year's Rally Sunday directly followed the Fall JSBTC Board and Minister's meetings, also in Toronto. That meant Rally Sunday came in with a bang!

This year Dr. Kenneth Tanaka was doing a special workshop with the board and ministers. While here, he kindly agreed to give a public lecture at the temple and a guest talk for Rally Sunday. Also in attendance was the JSBTC

National Board of Directors.

Thank you to all the temple groups for their wonderful displays which impressed our guests. It was evident that we are a busy temple with many groups and activities, and a terrific way to reconvene our regular temple schedule.

2 Lecture Series

With Rev. Christina Yanko

Introduction to Buddhism/Jodo Shinshu. This is specifically meant to help new members and people interested in coming to the Temple feel comfortable with what we do here, why we do it, and to ask any questions without feeling awkward.

Thursday October 16, 30, November 13, 27th from 7—8:30 pm.

Kyogyoshinsho Discussion Group. We will be doing close readings of the Kyogyoshinsho (the main text written by our founder Shinran Shonin) starting with the General Preface. We will compare different translations, look at specific characters and examine their significance, and discuss how the reading is relevant for us today.

Thursday October 9, 23, November 6 and 20th from 7—8:30 pm.

DANA NEWS

ONTARIO VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Three DANA Ladies were honoured with Ontario Volunteer Service Awards for 2014: Mrs. Kikumi Yoshida, over 50 years; Donna Nakano for 25 years; and Ms. Hamako Yoshida, over 15 years of service.

Thank you to Toronto Buddhist Church for their thoughtful gifts!

The **Annual TBC Bazaar** will be held on Saturday, November 8th. We hope that we can count on everyone for your contributions and continued support. Please mark this date on your calendar!

TBC DANA AGM

Dana will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, November 16th following the morning service. Lunch will be served, followed by the meeting. We welcome all Dana Members as well as new members.

Kid's Sangha

Welcome back to the Kids Sangha Program. It was great to see everyone after the summer holidays and it was so nice to see some new faces.

If you didn't get a chance to register in September, please feel free to come by in October...you can register anytime.

OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

October activities will involve lots of ART - painting, sketching and origami...



In October the kids will be making notebooks and note pads to sell at the Bazaar. We hope the kids can come out for this fun activity so we can make as many notepads as possible. All proceeds will go to Light Patrol. Light Patrol is an outreach program of Youth Unlimited that responds to the needs of Toronto's homeless and street involved youth. In October they will be launching their Compassion Series which fits in with the Kids Sangha theme - Living in the Dharma.

Just a note about the Bazaar

This year the Bazaar is on Saturday November 8th. We have a table in the Hondo to sell our notebooks, notepads and chocolate bars. Downstairs we will set up a lemonade stand in the kids classrooms. Last year we sold out of lemonade so this year we plan to have more available.

We are looking for little helpers on the day of the Bazaar so if your child would like to help please let me know... we all had a great time last year so please come and join us on this day!

Halloween Party

October 26th
12:30 pm



On the last Sunday of this month, don't forget to come to the Temple in your Halloween costume! Following the service we will have a spoooooooky party with games, prizes, and a costume parade...and of course candy. No Halloween is complete without candy.

Please contact Rev. Christina if you have any questions: rev.yanko@tbc.on.ca



2014 BAZAAR WORK SCHEDULE * *schedule listed is tentative and subject to change * *

Wednesday, October 29.....	Wash azuki beans
Saturday, November 1.....	Make Anko
Sunday, November 2.....	Put up bazaar banners - main entrance and side fence Take apart Social Hall stage
Wednesday, November 5	8.00 am..... Prepare ingredients for sushi: Soak shiitake and kampyo, flavour vinegar, Set up for Thursday manju making
	7.00 pm..... Move chairs from Hondo, Bring tables up to Hondo
Thursday, November 6	7.30 am..... Make manju Fold Oribako boxes Wash 250 lbs. Of rice 30 lbs. Mochi gome for Ohagi.
	7.00 pm..... Close Naijin, Set up tables in Hondo
Friday, November 7	7.00 am..... Make sushi, ohagi, cook udon, udon dashi, toppings for udon Cut, skewer and marinate beef for kushi sashi Cut pork for chow mein Cut vegetables for chow mein (and tempura) Wash rice for inarizushi
	evening Set up tables in Social Hall for food packaging Bring down brown trays for oribako Wash rice for Saturday's bazaar meals Rearrange tables in kitchen Set up kitchen for Saturday - cooking chow mein Ready kitchen for udon, tempura, teishoku dinner
Saturday, November 8	7.00 am..... Make chow mein, udon, tempura Package sushi, chow mein, ohagi, inari, bento, chirashizushi Set up tables in dining room Move oribako goods up to Hondo
	4.30 pm..... Clean up in Social Hall, Kitchen Clean up Hondo, Clean up Mezzanine



2014 ANNUAL TBC BAZAAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2014

The temple's annual bazaar is just around the corner and we need everyone's help. Without the funds raised, we would not be able to carry on with many of the temple's activities. Needed are donations such as:

New items for the Silent Auction and Lucky Draw
Japanese articles

Baked Goods and preserves
Plants and Books

*** * Gently-used items for the White Elephant section * ***

*** * Please note that we are unable to sell used clothing * ***

The temple will be able to accept donations **starting from Monday, November 3, 2014.**

If you are able to help during the week before the bazaar (especially Friday, November 7 and Saturday, November 8), please check the work schedule.

Should you have any questions, please email Joanne Omori at joanne.omori@hotmail.com or Dawn Anzai at canzai@sympatico.ca

Thank you for your continued support!
TBC BAZAAR COMMITTEE

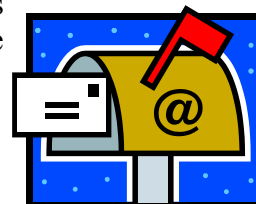
Going Postal With Mail, Part Two

In last month's Guiding Light, we asked our readers:

- (a) whether we should stop listing donors' names and donation amounts in hard copies of the Guiding Light;
- (b) whether they would consent to accessing their Guiding Light on the Temple's website at www.tbc.on.ca; and
- (c) whether they would consent to receiving *Shotsuki* notices, donation receipts and other communications from the Temple by email.

The purpose of this survey was to find a way to get a grip on our spiralling printing and mailing costs. The results were considerably less than overwhelming: we received one thoughtful written reply; as well as one indirect but revealing comment. A disappointment to be sure...

This means that over the next little while, our management will have to analyze and implement cost-cutting measures without taking everyone's views into account, except that we will always bear in mind as Rule One that the Guiding Light is our primary pipeline (a bad word these days) to our members and friends. We value the opinions of every one of our readers. If you do have constructive comments, please offer them now.



In Gassho.

The Temple Office

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF TORONTO BUDDHIST CHURCH

Date: Sunday, November 30, 2014
Time: 1:00 pm following the morning service and a light lunch
Place: Temple Social Hall

The Board of Directors of Toronto Buddhist Church wishes to notify all members of the Annual General Meeting of Members which will be held at the time, date and place set out above, and cordially invites all members to attend and vote on the matters raised at the Meeting. The following matters will be raised at the Meeting:

1. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday November 24, 2013
2. Presentation of Financial Statements of the Temple for the year ended October 31, 2013
3. Consideration and approval of the Budget for the year ending October 31, 2015
4. Election of Directors

Such other business as may properly come before the Meeting

A second Notice of the Meeting with further details will be posted in the Guiding Light for November. Please note that while attendance at the Meeting is open to all friends of the Temple, only members of the Temple will be entitled to speak and vote on any matters coming before the meeting. A member of the Temple is (a) one who has been designated by the Temple as an honorary member, or (b) an individual whose written application for membership has been accepted and who has paid his or her membership fee for 2014. If you have not submitted your membership application yet, please do so along with payment of your membership fee by October 31, so your membership may be processed in time for the Meeting.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

2014 FALL OHIGAN**THANK YOU!**

As is the custom, we honour our Ontario Volunteer Service Award (OVSA) recipients at the Fall Higan service. OVSA recipients for 2014 are:



Mrs. Kikumi Yoshida (50+ years), Mr. Toshio Mori (50+ years), Ms. Donna Nakano (25 years), Mr. Nobby Shiraishi (25 years), Mr. Mas Matsuyama (25 years), Ms. Hamako Yoshida (15 years), Mr. Koji Goto (Youth) and Mr. Stephen Taguchi (Youth).

CONGRATULATIONS and many thanks to all of the recipients for your many contributions to the temple.

**WELCOME & FAREWELL!**

It was a very busy day as many members of the congregation were able to meet our new minister, Rev. Ryuhei Endo. Due to time constraints and uncertainty as to Rev. Fujii's schedule, we also bid farewell to Rev. Fujii, Naoko-san and Harufumi. After 9 years, it is not easy to say good-bye.

The joint morning service was officiated by Rev. Yanko, Rev. Endo, Rev. Fujii and Jeff Wilson-Sensei. The service was followed by a Potluck luncheon held in the Social Hall. Over 200 persons attended and there was a great variety of food that was enjoyed by all. Thank you to everyone for all your delicious food contributions!

After the luncheon, oribako boxes of food were offered in exchange for donations to the Daily Food Bank. The monies collected will be added to the temple's Thanksgiving food drive.

Special thanks to the volunteers for making this a memorable occasion!



EBL in Washington, DC Aug 29 – Sept. 1, 2014

This year's EBL conference was hosted by Ekoji Buddhist Temple in Washington, D.C. The conference theme was "FLOURISHING THROUGH DIFFERENCE" with the intent of bringing hope for the future.

There were several workshops available for delegates to participate through lectures or discussion groups focusing on topics such as: Meditation and Mindfulness, Naikan (Self-Reflection), Multi-faith Families, and Sangha for the Larger Community. It was a great opportunity to share personal stories and experiences with new friends from various temples in the States and at the same time support one another.

After the Sunday morning service took place, 8 panelists from various Eastern district temples, namely EDC, Ekoji, MBT, BTC, Cleveland, Seabrook, New York and Toronto spoke about one of the challenges their temple is faced with and how we address the challenge. Breakout groups were formed to have further discussion on strategies and how to support each other.



Food Drive

Shin Fujinkai members are holding a FOOD DRIVE for the **Daily Bread Food Bank** from **October 1, 2014 to October 26, 2014.**



Please help us collect dry, **non-perishable foods** to help feed those who are struggling and requiring assistance in our community within Toronto and GTA.

This Thanksgiving, let us be mindful and give in order to help others in the community.

Suggested food donations are:

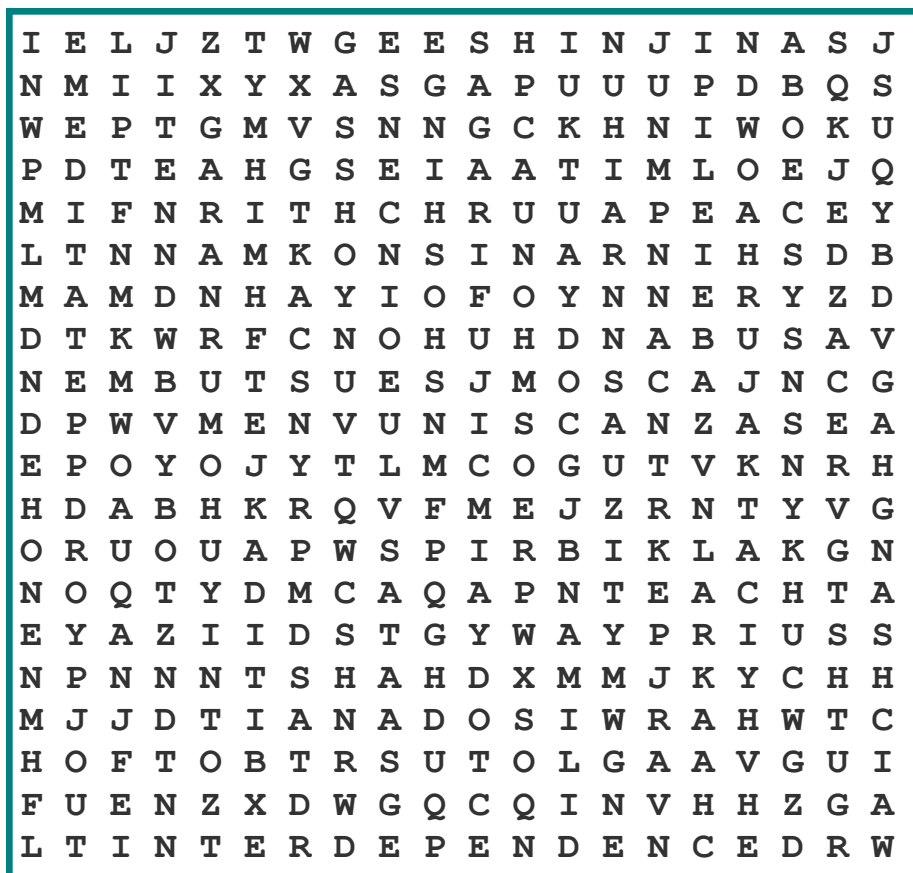
peanut butter
dried and canned beans
canned fruits and vegetables
baby formula
oatmeal
High Fibre/Low Sugar Cereals
mayonnaise

canned fish
lentils
baby food - vegetable and fruit
dried pasta and rice
flour
cans of soup or stew

canned meat in water
100% Fruit juice
baby cereal
pasta sauce
granola bars
olive oil



Word Search



Amida	Rennyō
Buddha	Sagarifūji
Chant	Sangha
Compassion	Shantao
Dharma	Shinjin
Eitaikyo	Shinran
Gassho	Shoshinge
Gentle	Sutra
Honen	Vasubandhu
Impermanence	
Incense	
Interdependence	
Light	
Lotus	
Meditate	
Mindful	
Nagarjuna	
Nembutsu	
Nirvana	
Peace	



Buddhist Parable: The Search for Enlightenment



There once was a poor man who lead a donkey every day across the border from one kingdom to another. The border guards suspected that he was smuggling something, so each day as the man passed the border they carefully searched the man and the donkey's saddlebags, but they never did find anything.

After a while the man starts to wear more expensive clothing and buys a large house. The border guards redouble their efforts to inspect the man and his donkey closely because they now are certain the man is smuggling something. But in their daily searches of the man and the saddlebags they never come up with anything but straw.

After 30 years of this daily routine, one of the border guards retires. One day when the retired border guard is walking across the street, he runs into the man and says "Listen, I am no longer a border guard and I can no longer hurt you. I promise I will never tell anyone, but just for my peace of mind, please tell me what you have been smuggling all those years." The man replies "Because I know that you can no longer arrest me, I will tell you. I was smuggling donkeys."

*Although I too am within Amida's grasp,
Passions obstruct my eyes and I cannot see him;
Nevertheless, great compassion is untiring and illumines me always.*
— Shinran Shonin

