



# THE GEPPPO



*A publication of the Ogden Buddhist Temple*

155 North Street Ogden, UT 84404

P.O. Box 3248 Ogden, UT 84409

Supervising Reverend: Rev. Jerry Hirano

Rev. Hirano contact info: Office – 801-363-4742

Home – 801-299-8727

Emergency – 801-819-2648

*September/October 2021 Issue*

801/392-7132

Temple President: James A.

Minister's Assistant: Geoffrey R.

Minister's Assistant: James A.

Junior Minister's Assistant: Charles A.

Web Site: [ogdenbuddhistchurch.org](http://ogdenbuddhistchurch.org)

Temple E-mail: [ogdenbuddhisttemple@gmail.com](mailto:ogdenbuddhisttemple@gmail.com)

## ★ SPECIAL COVID-19 GEPPPO ★

We MISS our Temple Members  
We MISS our Temple Gatherings  
We MISS our Temple Dharma Talks  
SOON, things will return to a NEW normal  
And we will be able to gather again.  
Until then, be SAFE, be HEALTHY,  
And BE HAPPY ... at home!

Due to the COVID-19 situation and the uncertainty surrounding it, we do not know when we will be able to gather again, therefore this is a special shortened version of The GEPPPO.

All calendar items are on hold until further notice.

We will keep our website updated with all the necessary information as well as our Facebook page.

**If you DO NOT have access to our website or Facebook page,  
please call any board member and we will be happy to keep you updated.**



# What is your Spiritual DNA?

By Reverend Jerry K. Hirano

*How many goodly creatures are there here!  
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,  
That has such people in't.*

*William Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act V*

This quote is from Shakespeare's "The Tempest." It is the inspiration for Aldous Huxley's title for the novel "Brave New World". For those who may not have read the book, I recommend it. It's not that big of a book, but it has so many awakening ideas. A quick summary: it is about a society that has been engineered into five basic castes: Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons. Because of the technology wielded by the World State's (a unified government that administers the entire planet, with a few exceptions) leaders, caste is pre-determined and humans are grown in a manner appropriate to their status; the lower the caste, the dumber and uglier the individual is created to be. As adults, the upper two castes interact socially with each other but *never* with the lesser groups—that would be a total social suicide.

Class is used as a mechanism for stability and control on the part of the government. It's also a big part of the reason that personal identity is eliminated—Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons are simply faceless drones in color-coded outfits who exist to serve the more intelligent Alphas and Betas.

In some ways, I worry that our society's current religious spirit is moving towards a spiritual society similar to the "World State" Aldous Huxley describes in his book. It is a group that is trying to just be happy and control is paramount. It is like the idea that Religion equals just being happy. As Karl Marx stated, "Religion is the opium of the masses."

I have been thinking of much of this after receiving my DNA test results from Ancestry.com. I have to admit, although not surprisingly, but a little disappointingly, that it stated I am very Japanese; 93 percent Northern Japanese, 3 percent Southern Japanese islands and 4 percent Korean. I was happy with the 4 percent Korean. Maybe that's why I love Korean dramas, but I don't understand any Korean and have only been to Korea once. Maybe I'm genetically inclined not only to like Korean dramas but also Korean food for that matter, but I think if genetics controlled my food choices, I should have some Vietnamese and Mexican in there somewhere too.

Looking at my DNA results says that I'm pretty Japanese. But what does that mean for who I am? I may genetically be Japanese, but I know that my thinking and personality are very American and not very Japanese. One of the things my Japanese friends in Japan would call me is "Hen na Gaijin" meaning "strange foreigner". They said this was because I looked Japanese, but I definitely did not think or act like a Japanese, in much the same way that my DNA does not define my personality. DNA can't really show your spiritual identity. That said, there are some religious markers in genetics. For example, there are markers for Ashkenazy Jews. Although in the current state of Israel, founded by predominantly Ashkenazy Jews, their DNA is basically the same as their so-called enemies, the Palestinians. There are even DNA markers for Mormons in the intermountain area. However, what I have learned from one of my favorite PBS shows, "Finding your roots" DNA is only a small part of who you are. This is what made me think about my spiritual DNA.

I have found that Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is an expression of my spiritual DNA. I was fortunate to have a father that told me I was not Buddhist until I could say I was Buddhist with a certain degree of understanding. As a result, he let me go to any church I wanted to. Having been born in Salt Lake City, Utah, I did go to the Mormon Church for a variety of activities. And just being an American and the

cultural influence of living in the United States, much of my personal moral understanding is based upon Christian ethics. Growing up in America, I could say that I have had more Christian influence than Buddhist. As a basic example of time spent, I went to the Buddhist temple once, maybe twice a week. On Sundays I went from about 10-12 for service. For about a year, until my Dad let me quit, I supposedly went to Japanese School at the temple on Saturdays for about an hour, maybe less. I skipped classes as much as possible. However I lived across the street from Whittier Ward. Growing up I went to Mutual (Junior High School weekday program), Primary (Elementary school weekday program), scouts, basketball, softball. My exposure to the LDS church may have been far greater than to that of our Buddhist Temple. However, even though my spiritual DNA may have these various religious markers, I cannot be Christian or LDS. I can't even be Zen or Tibetan Buddhist. I can only be Jodo Shinshu because within Jodo Shinshu I have found so many things that resonate with who I am.

My current worry is that there are many people in our Buddhist Churches of America who want our Jodo Shinshu community to be the same as other churches or religions. They also have the attitude that Jodo Shinshu should fit into the way they feel or what they believe, rather than serve as a spiritual or moral guide to make me a better human being. An example of this is reading the comments to our CBE seminar on Zoom on "Socially Engaged Buddhism" and what the Bishops of the BCA, Canada and Hawaii kyodans see for the future of Jodo Shinshu. As the CBE director, I get to read all the comments people send in and I can tell that people want Jodo Shinshu to fit in with their personal beliefs, such as social justice or the idea that everyone needs to just get along and the feeling "Isn't all religion the same?" Comments to our seminar on "Socially Engaged Buddhism" with Rev. Mitsuya Dake of Ryukoku University and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara of Jodo Shinshu International, who are experts in this area, showed how people didn't like the idea that Jodo Shinshu has a different view on "Social Justice" and social engagement as commonly expressed in America.

When I read these comments, or hear some of our Jodo Shinshu ministers saying things like, "There is no repentance in Jodo Shinshu," or the emphasis on "just being happy!" I feel like I am one of those characters in Aldous Huxley's novel by the name of John the Savage in the 'Brave New World' of genetic sameness without emotions, feelings, or religious aspirations. In this society, authentic emotions and individual identity are conditioned out of children at a young age so there are no lasting relationships because everyone belongs to everyone else. *John the Savage says, "I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness, I want sin."* What John wants is true and real life, one that has colors and differences, happiness and sadness. True and real life doesn't go the way we want it to. It goes the way it is. Our spiritual practice is to see, understand and accept this with gratitude.

My spiritual DNA may be mixed, Jodo Shinshu, various other types of Buddhism and most certainly a little of Christianity and Mormonism thrown in. But the only thing I know that works for me is saying, "Namo Amida Butsu" To simplify, my spiritual DNA is made up of blind passions and deep karmic evil. Thus the only thing I can do is say, "Namo Amida Butsu." I would like to close with Shinran's words from Chapter 1 of the Tannisho

*"Know that the Primal Vow of Amida makes no distinction between people young and old, good and evil; only shinjin is essential. For it is the vow to save the person whose karmic evil is deep and grave and whose blind passions abound."*

What is your Spiritual DNA?

Namo Amida Butsu.



**Back by  
Popular Demand!** & COVID ☹️

**Once again  
our BWA  
Ladies are  
working to  
create another  
beautiful quilt!  
Make sure you  
purchase your  
raffle tickets  
now!**

**Buddhist Church of Ogden**  
The

**BIZARRE BAZAAR**  
**Raffle**

Tickets are \$5.00 each!

Lots of other prizes will be raffled away!

Drawing will be held October 9<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm via Facebook LIVE!

Order Form in the GEPP0!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Ishii Bashi O Tataite Wataru – Japanese Proverb*

This is an old Japanese saying that states, “Prior to crossing a stone bridge, one should check the safety of the bridge by striking each stone before stepping on it.” A simplified English variation of that might be, that “one looks before they leap”. That being said, given our current circumstances, the board has rather mixed feelings in regard to reopening the temple for regular Sunday services and events. On one hand, we all have the desire to congregate and appreciate the dharma as a sangha, as we have all our lives. On the other hand, we have to weigh the health and wellbeing of all members and guests who visit the temple. In July due to the amazing work of our Reopening Committee, Reverend Hirano was able to conduct the Obon Services for all of our departed temple members who have passed within the last two years. This Obon was a truly special event in a number of ways. We were able to finally make in-person contact with each other for the first time in over a year. We have also lost plenty of beloved dharma friends and family members over this past year, and this service was able to serve as a source of comfort and perhaps even closure for our sangha as a whole. This recent year has certainly not been easy, but with the diligent efforts from all us following state health guidelines, we were able to safely and properly honor our ancestors.



Looking towards the future, Reverend Hirano and the board is looking to open the temple's doors as soon as October. The board is dedicated to the safety of everyone; therefore, due to impermanent/ever-changing circumstances of the world we live in, we are monitoring all CDC and state guidelines, as well as following the guidance from BCA to ensure a safe and successful reopening. I am looking forward to seeing and sharing the dharma with everyone again soon. In the meantime, I'd like to thank everyone for their continued patience, the board for their diligent efforts, and Reverend Hirano for his continued guidance. It is times like these that it's absolutely crucial that we fortify our will and entrust ourselves in the three treasures: The Buddha, The Dharma, and The Sangha.

In Gassho, James

# THANK YOU !

We would like to  
**THANK EVERYBODY**  
 for participating in our  
 OBON service!  
 It was different, but it was  
**GREAT**  
 to see everybody!



## ***BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION DONATIONS***

*Thank you*

Thank you for your donations:

*(Omitted for online version)*

### **2021 Membership**

Kim H., Stephanie H., Marie H., Emy H., Marion H.,  
 LaVerne K., Kyoko M., Tena M., Yai Y.

## **Lawn Mowing Schedule**

We still need help to keep our temple grounds looking fantastic!  
 We APPRECIATE everybody's help in keeping our temple grounds beautiful!

\* Depending on the COVID-19 situation, please follow the CDC Guidelines for social distancing. \*

<b>For the Week Of</b>	<b>Scheduled Group</b>
August 28	Bart H., Kevin H. & kids
September 4	Steve K., Blaine Y. & Bruce F.
September 11	Mike K. & Geoff R.
September 18	Ernie K., Andrew K.
September 25	James A. & Charles A.
October 2	Tom F., Mike K. & Craig S.
October 9	Kirk Y. & Steve Y.
October 16	Bart H., Kevin H. & kids
October 23	Steve K., Blaine Y. & Bruce F.



# DHARMA SCHOOL DONATIONS

*(Omitted for online version)*

# TAIKO DONATIONS

*(Omitted for online version)*



It's time to bring your stuff to  
The Ogden Buddhist Church!

We are having a  
Yard Sale  
Garage Sale  
Junk Sale  
Patio Sale  
Estate Sale  
Moving Sale  
...whatever kind of sale you  
want to call it ...

## Bring it ALL

(except for clothes – NO clothing items please)

## THE OGDEN BUDDHIST CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE

**Saturday • September 18, 2021 • 8:00 am – 12:00 pm**

If you need a pick up, please contact Steve Kato at (801) 698-5305  
or

You can drop off your items on  
Saturday, September 11, 2021 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will accept items and prepare for the sale on  
Friday, September 17, 2021 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Prep on Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 am



# This year we will celebrate with a **DRIVE THRU BAZAAR !**

We will be making and selling  
**CHICKEN TERIYAKI BENTO BOXES**

\$10.00 each

Drive through pick up  
on Saturday, October 9, 2021

Pick up times:  
12:00 – 1:00 pm  
1:00 – 2:00 pm  
2:00 – 3:00 pm  
3:00 – 4:00 pm



Order form included in GEPP0 ~ Orders must be received by September 25, 2021

## **BWA MANJU FUND RAISER**

**Manju Plates for Pick-up Only at the Ogden Buddhist Church**  
**Sunday, November 14, 2021**  
**Pick-up time: 3:00 – 5:00 pm**

\$8.00 per tray of 6 homemade Manju pieces

You will need to choose:  
All Fukashi Manju tray  
All Mochi Manju tray  
Mix of both 3 Fukashi and 3 Mochi Manju tray



Order form included in GEPP0

Orders must be received by October 31, 2021

Buddhist Church of Ogden  
 The  
**BIZARRE BAZAAR**  
 Raffle

**ORDER FORM**

The Ogden BWA is sponsoring a virtual **Bizarre Bazaar Raffle** to support the **BUDDHIST CHURCH OF OGDEN**

The GRAND prize is a handmade quilt created by the Ogden BWA. There will be several other items to raffle away and will be listed on our website.

THE VIRTUAL BIZARRE BAZAAR RAFFLE WILL TAKE PLACE ON OCTOBER 9, 2021 AT 6:00 PM VIA FACEBOOK LIVE!

Ticket Price: \$5.00 per ticket

You can print this form and mail in your check to: P.O. Box 3248 Ogden, UT 84409 OR you can VENMO @BuddhistChurchofOgden. Please note: RAFFLE & number of tickets purchasing



Thank you for your support!  
TICKETS ARE \$5.00 EACH

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of tickets ordered \_\_\_\_\_ x \$5.00 each = \$\_\_\_\_\_ total due

You can print this form and mail in your check to: P.O. Box 3248 Ogden, UT 84409 OR you can VENMO @BuddhistChurchofOgden. Please note: RAFFLE, your name & number of tickets purchasing

ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED BY **OCTOBER 9, 2021 BY 4:00 pm**



# BWA MANJU FUND RAISER



Fukashi "Steamed" Manju



Mochi Manju



Mochi Manju cooling

The Ogden BWA will be hosting a pick-up Manju Sale  
on Sunday, November 14, 2021  
Pick-up time: 3:00 – 5:00 pm

\$8.00 per tray of 6 homemade Manju pieces



## BWA MANJU ORDER FORM

Thank you for your support!  
Manju will be ready for pick-up on  
Sunday, November 14, 2021 from 3:00 – 5:00 pm  
\$8.00 per plate of 6 homemade Manju

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select Manju type by putting number of **trays** ordered in the square (example: place a number 3 in the square next to "6-pieces of Fukashi Manju" if you would like 3 **trays** of Fukashi Manju):

**6-pieces of Fukashi Manju tray**

**6-pieces of Mochi Manju tray**

**3-pieces of Fukashi Manju & 3-pieces of Mochi Manju tray**

# of **trays** ordered \_\_\_\_\_ x \$8.00 each = \$\_\_\_\_\_ total due

You can print this form and mail in your check to: P.O. Box 3248 Ogden, UT 84409

Make checks payable to: The Ogden Buddhist Church

OR you can VENMO **@BuddhistChurchofOgden.**

Please note: MANJU, your name & your order.

ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED BY **OCTOBER 31, 2021**

# OGDEN BUDDHIST CHURCH DRIVE-THRU BAZAAR



The Ogden Buddhist Church will be hosting our first  
DRIVE-THRU BAZAAR  
**Saturday, OCTOBER 9, 2021**

**CHICKEN TERIYAKI  
BENTO BOX  
\$10.00**

Pick-up Times:

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm  
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm



## Ogden Buddhist Church Drive-thru BAZAAR Order Form

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Chicken Teriyaki Bento Boxes Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

- Pick up time:
- 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
  - 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
  - 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
  - 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Bento Boxes are \$10.00 each. Total Included in Order: \$\_\_\_\_\_

You can print this form and mail in your check to: P.O. Box 3248 Ogden, UT 84409

OR you can VENMO @**BuddhistChurchofOgden**.

Please note: BENTO, your name, # of boxes, & time of pick-up.

ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED BY **SEPTEMBER 25, 2021**