

# Sangha News

Mar–Apr 2011

*Special Event*

Ohiganye March 20  
(Spring Equinox)

Hanamasturi April 10—  
also known as the Flower  
Festival celebrating the  
birthday of Buddha

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## Silly Squirrels

by Sensei James Martin

There are several black squirrels that live in the trees across the road from my house. During the winter squirrels are not true hibernators like bears but generally only retreat inside when the weather is particularly harsh. During milder periods they emerge to forage and in the case of the ones across the street, I watch them expending enormous amounts of time and energy chasing intruders and jealously defending their territories.

I was having the thought that the squirrels would be a lot wiser to save their energy and simply share the space as there seems to be an inexhaustible supply of trees and food in the area. One of the neighbours down the street puts food out for the birds and of course the squirrels take full advantage of this endless supply also. Maybe this gives them a sense of security but wouldn't it be smarter to conserve energy for winter survival until the warmer days of spring and summer arrive? If energy wasn't expended chasing some potential rival away from some temporary territorial claim belonging to big black squirrel #1, then that energy would be available when temperatures dip and just staying warm is the difference between life and death.

Humans would never do anything as silly as that would they? People never stake out a chunk of land and then expend huge quantities of resources and energy keeping others out do they? We never fight and jealously guard things that I have arbitrarily labelled as mine even at the expense of causing death to others and perhaps even myself? We never refuse to share our resources even though there are abundant quantities for all.

Aren't humans supposed to be functioning at a higher level of cognisance? Don't we, the human race, consider ourselves far superior to other species? Maybe we should rethink that or change our behaviour? Silly humans.

In gratitude for an abundance of riches,

Namo Amida Butsu  
Sensei James

# March 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 7:30-8:30 pm Chanting 101	<b>3</b> 7:30 pm Movie Night	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Shotsuki Service & DharmaTime	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 7:30-8:30 pm Chanting 101	<b>10</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Service	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Board Meeting	<b>16</b> 7:30-8:30 pm Chanting 101	<b>17</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Ohiganye Service & Dharma Time	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 7:30-8:30 pm Chanting 101	<b>24</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Service	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7:30 pm Service		

# April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Shotsuki Service	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 7:30 pm Movie Night	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Hanamatsuri & Dharma Time	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Board Meeting	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Service Temple Annual General Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:30 am Meditation 10:30 am Service	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 7:30 pm Service	<b>29</b> JSBTC AGM	<b>30</b> JSBTC AGM

A hurricane will not outlast the morning, a heavy rain will not outlast the day. Who has the power to hurry things? If Heaven and Earth do not hurry them, what shall a person do?  
Lao-tzu

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## Chanting 101

The 'official' chant of Jodo Shinshu is Shoshinge which was written by Shinran Shonin 750 plus years ago. In part the chant outlines the development of Jodo Shinshu over the course of several hundred years beginning with Shakyamuni Buddha.

On the few occasions we have chanted Shoshinge during a service, some members have complained that it is too long because it can take 20-30 minutes to do the whole piece and I used to be in complete agreement. Yet I have found from my own experience that becoming familiar with the chanting and the contents has dramatically changed my view-point. I find a meditative quality to doing the chant now. Chanting has many physical benefits and can deepen our spiritual journey by connecting with the inner and giving it a voice. Not surprisingly, human cultures throughout the centuries and every part of the world have intuitively made this connection.

Please join me on Wednesday evenings and perhaps find your inner voice through this ancient tradition passed on from previous Shin generations. You don't have to be 'musical', in fact I prefer if you aren't because then I sound better!

It will be an easygoing mixture of chanting and brief discussions of the meaning of what we are chanting.

Sensei James

People have a hard time letting go of their suffering. Out of a fear of the unknown, they prefer suffering that is familiar  
Thich Nhat Hanh

### The Calgary Buddhist Temple Vision & Mission

#### Vision

To set in motion a way of living, learning and teaching a life of joy and gratitude through Jodo Shinshu Buddhism

#### Mission

To develop Knowledge, understanding and awareness of Shin Buddhism by:

- Offering regular Temple services, Dharma school and study groups
- Celebrating Buddhist ceremonies and established traditions
- Sharing a dynamic resource centre for Buddhist study for all ages
- Skillfully applying Buddhist teachings with the Sangha and community at large

#### Key Values

Compassion  
Gratitude  
Transformation  
Wisdom  
Community