



# **SOTO MISSION OF HAWAII**

## **BETSUIN NEWSLETTER**

**May 2021**

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# Mother's Day and Buddha Day Service

On May 9, 9:30 AM, we will be observing Mother's Day and Buddha Day (birth of the Buddha) here at Betsuin.

Everyone of us who have received this precious life on this Earth, only were able to do so because of our mothers. Giving life to each and every one of us allows us to experience this wonderful world and for that we must express our gratitude to all mothers who not only gave us this life but also nurtured us. Likewise, Buddhism would not have existed without the founder, Shakyamuni Buddha.



The service will be live-streamed on our YouTube page. The link can be found on our homepage at [www.sotomission.org/live](http://www.sotomission.org/live).

# Bon Service and Bon Dance

We are making changes and thinking what is best for our members and our community day to day. Bon Service and Bon Dance is a major part of our tradition and excitement of the year. As we all probably thought that COVID-19 would be something that would end soon, we are still in the middle of the pandemic as we speak.



As we begin thinking and preparing for this year's Bon Service and Bon Dance, the temple decided that we will be having **Four Online Bon Services** this last year. Also, we will **Not be having Bon Dance** this year. Although the restrictions have soften a bit, we still believe that gathering members to the temple is a risk for our members and the community that have been coping with this pandemic to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We hope and believe that we are almost there but we do not want to let go of our guard just yet. However, we are looking at inviting those families observing **Hatsu Bon** to physically attend the Bon Service to dedicate for your loved ones. If your family has Hatsu Bon service this year, you will be receiving a different letter in the mail.

More information on the service will be sent out by early June. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

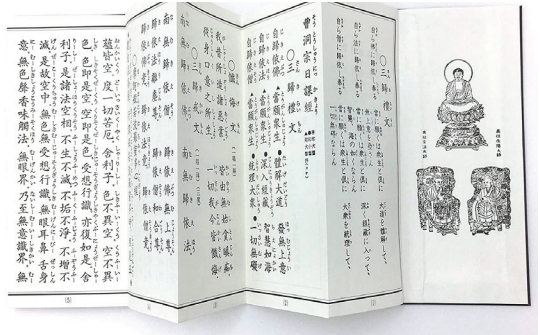
# Let's Learn about Soto-Shu:

## What is a Sutra

Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of the Buddha. For this reason, the words expounded by Shakyamuni Buddha have absolute authority and the sutras are collections of his sermons.

“Sutra” is a Sanskrit word that referred in Brahmanism

to those holy scriptures in which all sorts of teachings and regulations were recorded. This word is not unique to Buddhism and mean a “line” or “string.”



Following the death of Shakyamuni Buddha, his teachings were passed down from person to person by his disciples. However his disciples, concerned about the gradual changes in the contents of the teaching, gathered in a council to collect, organize, and correct the oral record of the Buddha’s teachings.

At this council, the Buddha’s successor (Mahakashapa) took a leading role. The sutras were corrected according to the memory of Ananda, who had the best memory of the Buddha’s great disciples, and the precepts corrected according to the memory of Upali, who was said to have been preminent in the practice of the precepts among the Buddha’s great disciples. These records were put together by a large number of the Buddha’s disciples who were, in this way, able to check and verify what had been heard as the Buddha’s teaching and give their consent to it.

Finally, studies and commentaries on the sutras and precepts were made and called “sastras”. The all-inclusive term given to these three things (sutras, precepts, and sastras) is the “Tripitaka” or “three baskets,” in other words, containers in which the sutras, precepts, and sastras are stored.

Later, the total amount of Buddhist literature became extremely vast and now referred to as the “whole Buddhist canon.”

## Fundamental Sutras

### The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye (Shobogenzo)

The Shobogenzo is a collection of Dogen Zenji's (one of the founders of Soto Mission) teachings that were written between August 1231 and January 1253. As the title indicates, this book thoroughly covers the main point (eye) of the True Dharma that was inherited by the successive ancestors following Shakyamuni Buddha.

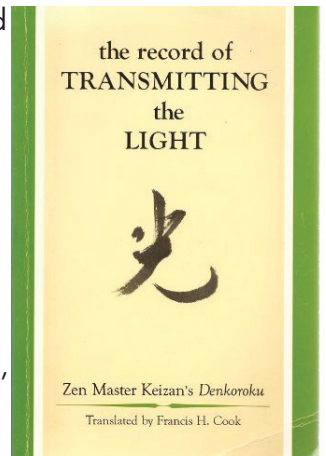
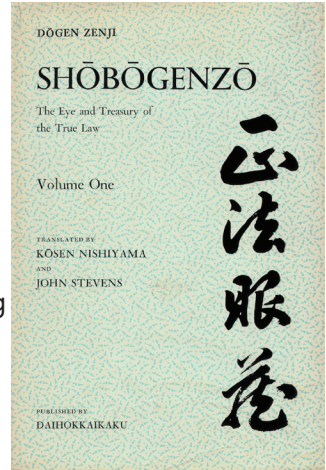
Much of the book's contents are sophisticated teachings that express in Dogen Zenji's unique language of his deeply enlightened mind. Even in modern times, this book is described as the greatest book on religious thought that has been produced in Japan.

The most common version of the Shobogenzo has 95 chapters. However, this edition was produced in 1690 by Dogen's Dharma descendants based on the idea that Dogen Zenji had originally intended the Shobogenzo to have 100 chapters.

There are two editions of the Shobogenzo that Dogen Zenji edited himself: one with 75 chapters and a later version with twelve chapters. It seems that his intention was to systematically organize these editions, and include other chapters. However, he died before he was able to complete this project. For that reason, there are various editions of the Shobogenzo that have survived to the present day, including a 60 chapter versions and a 28 chapter versions.

### Transmission of Light (Denkoroku)

The Denkoroku is a book of teachings that Keizan Zenji (one of the founders of Soto Mission) gave to the monks at Daijōji beginning in January 1300. He gave these teachings on behalf of his teacher, Gikai Zenji, and they were then brought together in book



form by a priest who was close to Keizan Zenji. As this is a record of the teachings he gave, they were not written down by him.

The Buddha-dharma of zazen that originated with Shakyamuni Buddha was transmitted through India, China, and Japan by 53 ancestors until Keizan Zenji. The Denkoroku is a collection of teachings in which Keizan Zenji speaks about the way in which this Dharma was correctly conveyed. Each chapter deals with one of the ancestors in this lineage, quoting from their biographies, taking up the primary theme of their awakening to the Way, and the conditions that brought about their awakening. These are all brought together with Keizan Zenji's commentary, his admonitions to the monks, and a concluding verse.

This book is based on Dogen Zenji's teachings and since it traces the historical facts of the 53 ancestors who transmitted the teaching of Soto Zen, it is esteemed along with the Shobogenzo as one of the representative books of the Soto Zen School.

(Article from Sotoshu Shumucho)

## **Membership Dues and Update on Maintenance of the Temple**

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who paid your membership, nokotsudo maintenance dues, and any donation you have made for the year 2021. The donations you have made goes a long way in maintaining the temple. The many projects that were undertaken in the past few years include building of the front gate, reinforcement of steeple structure, relocating gas and electrical lines under ground, and re-piping the sewage and waterline to the temple. There are still leaks through the ceiling of the temple entrance-way area, meeting room area, ministers' dressing room that need to be fixed and your donation will help the temple maintain and fix the problems that we are encountering.



We sincerely say "Thank you very much" for your continued support.

## **Volunteers to Clean the Nokotsudo**

We are still looking for volunteers who are able to come to the temple once a week to help clean the nokotsudo, including changing the water in vases, disposing of dried flowers and wiping the counter. If you are able to assist us, please call or come to the temple to let us know about your availability.



## **Temple Hour Change**

May 30 Temple Closed for 5th Sunday

May 31 Temple Closed at Noon in observance of Memorial Day

## **Upcoming Events**

May 9, 9:30 AM Buddha Day and Mother's Day Services

## **Acknowledgment of Donations**

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their generous donations in March.

### **Spring Higan Service & Kannon Ko Donations**

Katherine Higuchi, Gary & Laura Nakamura, James Koga, Miyeko Hashimoto, Arden & Mary Loomis, Carolyn Iwamoto, Grace Koizumi, Sally Nozaki, Jean Maekawa, Arthur & Velvet Yoshinami, Helen Tsuchiya, Bernice Koike, Jamie Peterson, Mark & Sharon Bryant, Mona Sawai, Linda Unten, Thomas & Chiye Itagaki, Ethel Watanabe, Keiko Kawagishi, Hiromi Shimada, Elizabeth Kiyota, Edwin & June Nakahara, Sue Nishiguchi, Wayne Warashina, Ellen Nishimura, Marguerite Aono, Mildred Fukumoto, Gertrude Kihara.

### **Memorial Service / Funeral / General Donations**

Hawaii Soto-Shu Head Office, Dara Luanghinith, Pualani Kondo, Akiko Shibuya, Akio Nakagawa, J.A. Nakagawa, Loretta Fujiwara, Linda Unten, Ryuko Kokuzo, Ellen Nishimura, Bernice Koike, Yasuko Arakawa, Lawrence

Cutwright, Honolulu Fukushima Kenjinkai, Shigehiro Minami, Hawaii Soto Mission Association, Patsy M. Katada, Fuchat & Yeeling Chan, Miles Kasahara, Lynette Furuhashi, Edith Mukai, Leatrice Scow Jean Maekawa, Frank Childs, Violet Machida, Martin Matsuura, Stanley Kunisaki, D. Marie Devens, Grance Koizumi, Lorette Fujiwara, Myles Ohta, Carol E. Imai, F. R. Tanaka, Family of the Late Lillian Hiraoka, Anne Fukushima, Michiko Sasaki, Mason Maetani, Annette Matsumoto, Jon Nishimura, Leslie Ozawa, Arlene Kakazu, Margery Nishio, Catherine Ohta, Ernest Oi, Nancy Okamoto, Doris Onodera, Leslie Ozawa, Brian Sato, Ellen Shiraki, Susan Sturgill, Brian Suda, Michael Takaesu, Frances Takakawa, George Takeuchi, Judy Takeya, Frances Tanouye, Peter & Marie Uehara, Helen Yamamoto, Carl Yorita, Kikue Oyama, Susan Nadamoto, Claudia Akizaki-Kuwaha, H Pacific Construction, Jon Shimizu, Waikiki Bazaar, Gertrude Mori, Norma Muromoto-Maeda, Sarah Kam, Tsuyoshi Onuma, Joy Kida, Toshie Fukushima, James & Toshiko Sato, Stanley Masagatani, Kikue Oyama, Glen Yamasaki, Howard Tomatani, Stanley Ayano, Masae Hayashi, Gail Lum, Shigeo & Yaeko Kato, Clyde & Ann Shigi, Natalie Taniguchi, Ruby Mizue, Herbert Ishikawa, Akiyo Fujioka, Gertrude Kihara.

