



# Dharma Lei



## Bishop's Office Newsletter

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### Bishop's Message:

Aloha!

I hope this message finds you in good health and spirit! In what now feels like a very long time, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to loom over the world. I extend my thoughts and prayers to you and your family.

Personally, I had high hopes to be able to travel again to visit relatives in Japan and enjoy the summer season of Bon Dance in Hawaii. However, Japan still requires everyone entering the country to quarantine, and large public events in Hawaii are still not allowed. Additionally, I recently suffered a compression fracture in my already injury plagued spine. I would say that 2021 isn't going the way I had expected.

Although I couldn't travel to Japan, I am so happy that I instead chose to visit my older son Daishu and his family this summer in New Mexico. It was so much fun to play with my four-year-old and six-year-old granddaughters, albeit exhausting! I miss the large crowds at the Bon Dances, but I'm grateful that I can still enjoy chatting with occasional visitors over a cup of tea. The pain in my back is at times excruciating, especially in the morning. Still, I get out of bed each morning and go about my day. I told my son, Rev. Shuji, that as I heal little by little each day, "pain and I have become friends." So, as I enter the final months of 2021, I try to reflect positively upon this year, knowing that there are many things I am grateful for even during a global pandemic.

I encourage you to also try to reflect positively upon your experiences so far in 2021. By continuing to live each day to the fullest, let us be hopeful for a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving and holiday season. With palms together in gassho and prayer, may the blessing and protection of Kannon-sama be extended to you, your family, and friends. Namu Kie Butsu, Namu Kie Ho, Namu Kie So.



In Gassho.

Bishop Shugen Komagata



# *Adjusting how you breathe*

“呼吸を合わせる (*Kokyu wo Awaseru*)”

Story by Rev. Daito Noda

Adjusting how you breathe

The Niihama region of Ehime Prefecture, where I did some monastic training, has a unique greeting in the morning. It goes like this: “O-hayō, kōkyū shiyon-na? (Good morning! Are you breathing okay?)” Folks respond: “O-hayō, kōkyū shiyoruzo” (Good morning. I’m breathing fine).”

We human beings die when we stop breathing. With a loud cry, we begin to breathe immediately after being born. Our lives end with a sigh at our last breath. We breathe in and out without thinking about it, according to the laws of nature. It would be the height of arrogance to not be awed and grateful at being able to breathe this way. There are people who are sick, who can no longer breathe on their own, and who must receive oxygen at a hospital. People in the Niihama care about each other by greeting others by asking if they are breathing.

This year, how about focusing on the source of our life, the very act of breathing? We must get to know ourselves well, in order to breathe in just the right amount of air suitable for our bodies. In addition, we must not neglect how we breathe, no matter when or where we are.

I think that how one breathes is the same as one’s personal rhythm. At its essence, the universe moves according a particular rhythm. If we can align our own rhythm with that of the universe, I believe great energy will be unleashed. This universe is also called the Buddha’s world. If you wish to improve exponentially or wish to accomplish more than what you think you can, how about starting by working out your own appropriate breathing pattern?

Alright. Here is the Niihama Style response: “Yes. I’m breathing fine.”

