

NICHIREN NEWS

MARCH, 2017

Sacramento Nichiren Buddhist Church - 5191 24th Street, Sacramento, CA 95822 (916) 456-8371

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2017

5	---	no service
12	11:30am	Kaji Kito
19	---	no service
26	11:30am	Ohigan service
26	noon	Church meeting

April, 2017

2	---	no service
9	11:30am	Sunday service
16	---	no service
23	11:30am	Hanamatsuri
30	11:30am	Kaji Kito
30	noon	Church meeting

OHIGAN

Ohigan services are held twice a year (during the Spring and Fall Equinox) and are memorial services for our ancestors. The Spring service will be held on **Sunday, March 26, 2017 at 11:30am**. Please write the names of your ancestors and your name on the enclosed form; return the completed form to the Church before the 11:30am service.

HANAMATSURI

Sakyamuni Buddha was born on April 8. Hanamatsuri is the celebration of his birth. The Hanamatsuri service will be held on **Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 11:30am**.

New Year Party

The Church New Year Party was held at the Church on Sunday, January 29, 2017. Many thanks to the Fujinkai, Church members & friends who prepared the delicious luncheon.

CHURCH MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS--1/22/17

- Discussed the New Year Party preparations
- Discussed painting the Church & a new roof. Agreed to paint the lattice on the roof white. John Hughes got estimates from several roofing & painting companies.

CHURCH MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS--2/26/17

- Discussed the roof & paint for the Church. Agreed to do the work in stages. The first stage is to re-roof the temple. Will discuss the roof for the classroom & painting once the temple roof is redone
- Fujinkai agreed to donate \$8,000 towards the roof.
- Agreed to leave the lattice on the roof unless it is damaged.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

Fujinkai: Toshiko Yamada/\$10 membership

Memorial: John Hughes/\$200 (in memory of Edwin and Mary Hughes)

New Year Party: Shizuko Carr/\$50; Susumu Fujiwara/\$20; Ruby Gotow/\$20; Shotaro Hayashigatani/\$150; Joe Hitomi/\$25; Kanji Hitomi/\$30; Lily Hitomi/\$30; Kenjo and Mihoko Igarashi/\$100; Kazuyo and Carl Johnson/\$100; Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$40; Keiko and Kevin Lucas/\$50; Fusako and Masanao Okamoto/\$30; Akiye Shimada/\$100; Barbara Tanaka/\$25; Gail and Dave Tanaka/\$50; Yozo Yamada/\$50; a special thank you to all who donated raffle prizes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT (continued):

Setsubun (raffle prizes): Renee Dennis; Kanji Hitomi; Lily Hitomi; John Hughes; Mihoko Igarashi; Kiyoko Kuwabara; Keiko Lucas; Kathy Mine; Fusako Okamoto; Gail & Dave Tanaka

Roof Repair Fund: Joe Hitomi/\$700, Kenjo Igarashi/\$3,000; Noboru Tateishi/\$1,000

Special Donation: Hayakawa Family/Garbage cans & metal tubs; Joe Hitomi/\$448.40 (bazaar fund); Kanji Hitomi/soy beans and candy for the Setsubun service; Lily Hitomi/Printer; Mihoko Igarashi/Flowers for the Sunday services; Kazuyo Johnson/\$50; Thomas Murray/\$125 & \$160 Mondara; Don Nakao/Shelving Rack; Mike Tamai/1 gallon Round Up; Nichiren Headquarters Propagation Center/\$385.22

Special Thanks: John Hughes & Dave Tanaka repaired the chicken shed roof.

Membership - \$240: Ann Akiyama; Laurie Akiyama; Toshiko Akiyama; Renee Dennis; Ruby Gotow; John Hughes; Kyomi Igarashi; Kiyoko Kuwabara, Keiko Lucas; Kathy Mine; Liz Nettle; Noboru Tateishi; Yozo Yamada

NEW CHURCH MEMBER

We welcome Renee Dennis to our Church.

CONDOLENCES

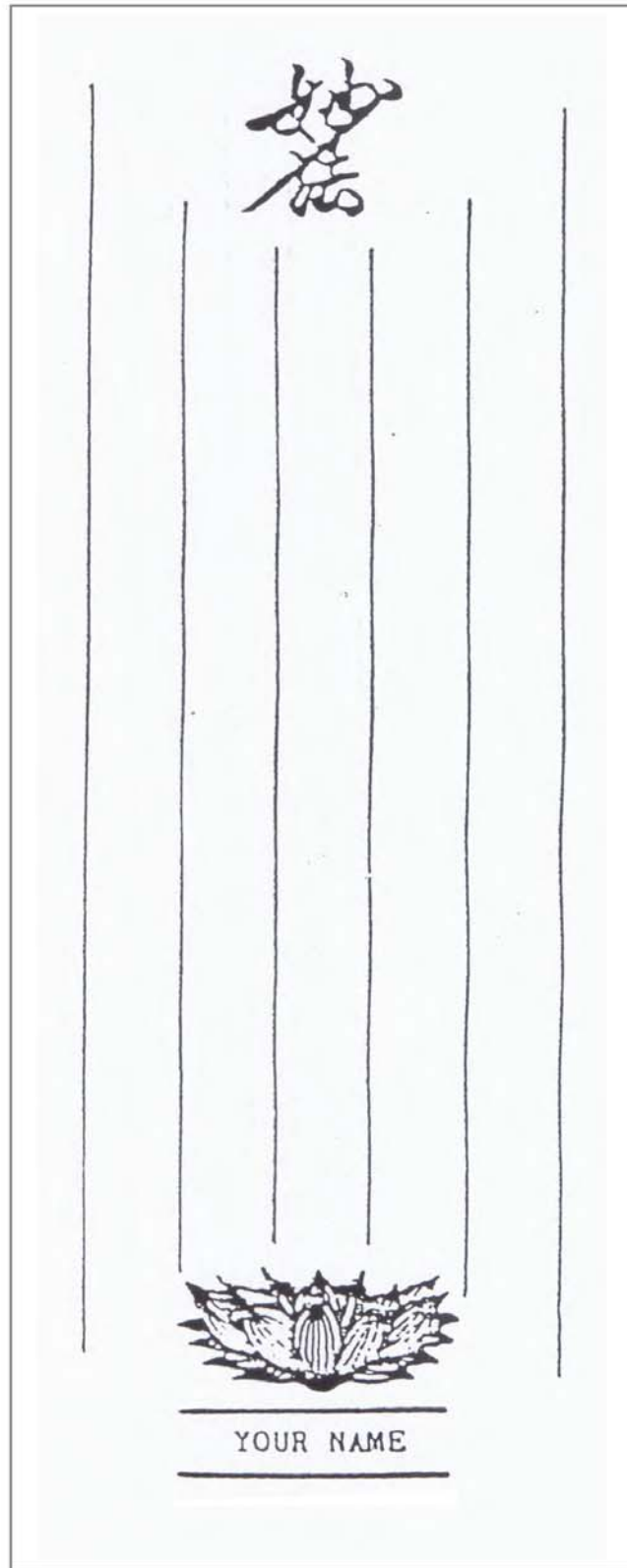
We offer our sincere condolences to the families of:

Miyo Kitamura who passed away on February 3, 2017.

Kanji Hitomi who passed away on March 6, 2017 at the age of 88.



Write the names of your deceased family members on the form below, cut out the form and return it to the Church before the service.



Calligraphic symbol

YOUR NAME

The Similarities Between Ohigan and Volunteering

Kenjo Igarashi

Often times, we hear about individuals participating in volunteer activity. Volunteers share hardships with people who are suffering or those who are placed in predicaments, free of charge. People praise those who participate in such volunteering and I do not deny that such actions of kindness are very important. However, these actions are more frequently praised we can see these actions being done with our very own eyes. Therefore, the idea of helping others and performing these same actions through spiritual means is considered very different from what we consider to be “volunteering”.

Someone told me the other day that Buddhism is a religion, which exists for times when people need to hold funeral and memorial services. I believe that the reason for this “misunderstanding” is because the concept of memorial services in Buddhism is difficult to grasp here in the United States. This may also be because materialistic views are very prominent today and therefore, many people only tend to believe what they can physically see with their very own eyes.

In order to understand the meaning of spiritual prayer during times such as memorial services and Ohigan, we must consider the purpose behind our existence in this world. In Buddhism, we state that a human being is born into this world due to accumulated “bad” karma from past lives. Therefore, in order to rid of this “bad” karma, we are born into this suffering world and experience what Buddhists consider to be the four sufferings, which are birth, old age, sickness, and death. However, at the same time, we must also understand that not all individuals are born as human beings and many also fall into different realms of suffering, such as that of animals.

However, even when we are living in such a world, we know that there are different degrees of suffering that we experience even within the same realm, as that of human beings. As stated before, this is due to the differing amounts of bad karma that we carry with us. However, at the same time, we can also say that by actually living in this world, it is impossible to avoid creating sins because sometimes we do this without realizing it. For example, we may unconsciously make a comment that hurts another individual.

The prime reason why there are individuals who are unable to leave the suffering realms is because it is hard to fully comprehend their reason for being born into this world. Such souls repetitively return to the different realms of the suffering world and cannot rest in peace. In other words, they are always asking for our help.

Like stated before, in volunteering, we must understand the feelings and the experience of the other individual in order to help them. We can also say that praying during Ohigan also incorporates this same idea as well. We never fully know the state of deceased individuals or different spirits. In other words, they may be suffering or having concerns about the realm that they are currently living in because they want to escape it. However, due to the situation of the realm that they currently live in, they may not have the potential to accumulate “good” karma. Like volunteering, we as individuals living also in this suffering world, must also become one with these spirits and come to understand their pain and their concerns in order to help them. We do this by praying and chanting the sutra.

Therefore, during this month of Ohigan, we must get together and recite the sutra and chant the odaimoku in order to help those spirits, which cannot rest in peace or are unable to cultivate their own virtue and approach this in the same manner that we approach, what is considered to be “volunteering”.