

NICHIREN NEWS

September, 2017

Sacramento Nichiren Buddhist Church - 5191 24th Street, Sacramento, CA 95822 (917) 456-8371

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September, 2017

3	11:30am	Sunday service
10	---	no service
17	---	no service
24	11:30am	Ohigan service
24	noon	Church meeting

October, 2017

1	---	no service
8	11:30am	Sunday service
14	Saturday 11am-2pm	Food Bazaar
15	11:30am	Kaji Kito
22	---	no service
29	11:30am	Oeshiki service
29	noon	Church meeting

OHIGAN SERVICE

Ohigan service will be held on Sunday, September 24, 2017. This service takes place twice a year (during the Spring and Fall equinoxes).

Please write the names of your deceased family members on the enclosed form, and return the form to Church before the 11:30am service.

CHURCH MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS-7/23/17

- ▶ Discussed Fall food bazaar; changed prices of some items and added agesushi and chicken salad
- ▶ Discussed termite issue and will use the less expensive company.

CHURCH MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS-8/27/17

- ▶ Discussed preparations for Fall food bazaar
- ▶ Discussed and agreed to purchase one large memorial tablet for our past ministers.

FALL FOOD BAZAAR

Saturday, 10/14/17

11:00am to 2:00pm

Members & friends are asked to help at the Fall Food Bazaar. Preparations will take place on **Thursday, October 12, 2017, Friday, October 13, 2017 and Saturday, October 14, 2017.**

Pre-sale forms may be picked up at Church or printed from the website. Completed forms must be returned to the Church with payment by Monday, September 25, 2017.

Agesushi - \$6.00

Barasushi - \$5.00

Bento - \$10.00

Curry Rice - \$6.00

Ruby's Chicken Salad - \$5.00

Spam Musubi - \$4.00

Teriyaki Beef Sandwich - \$5.00

Teriyaki Chicken - \$7.00

Udon - \$5.00

Please ask family & friends to help support our Church. Depending on the number of pre-sale items ordered, additional food may be purchased at this event.

Baked goods and crafts will also be sold. Please bring in your donations for sale.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

Memorial: Arthur Sugiyama (in memory of Sandra Sugiyama/\$500; Tammi Uchida (in memory of Michiko Kunishi)/\$100

Special donations: Fusako Okamoto/flowers for Sunday services; John Hughes/\$500 (for painter) & canopy

Building Fund: Kenjo Igarashi/\$1,000

Acknowledgements continued:

Obon: Susumu Fujiwara/\$40; Yukiko Hachiya/\$20; Joe Hitomi/\$20; Lily Hitomi/\$30; Yoshiko Hitomi/\$50; John & Mary Hughes/\$150; Kazuyo Johnson/\$100; Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$40; Keiko Lucas/\$50; Kathy Mine/\$20; Takashi Mizuno/\$50; Thomas Murray/\$200; Kinjiro Nakatogawa/\$100; Liz Nettle/\$50; Masanao & Fusako Okamoto/\$30; Yurimi Sawamura/\$25; Dave & Gail Tanaka/\$30; Brian Tsuda/\$20; Hideko Tsuetaki/\$50; Chiharu Yamada/\$20

Fujinkai: Arthur Sugiyama (in memory of Sandra Sugiyama)/\$100

Membership: Renee Dennis/\$20; Thomas Murray/\$240; Betsi Ann Nagasawa/\$20 & \$20; Chiharu Yamada/\$240

Temple: Thomas Murray/\$10

Hall Rental: Laurie Akiyama/\$100

For Houon Kansha: Kyomi Igarashi/\$1,000

CONDOLENCES

We offer sincere condolences to the family of:

Sandra Sugiyama who passed away on July 6, 2017 at the age of 84.



Reflecting on Our Individual Buddhist Practice

Kenjo Igarashi

As Buddhists, we observe several religious customs throughout the year, many of which involve praying for our ancestors. Most recently, we had the *Obon* (お盆) service in August, followed by the upcoming *Ohigan* (お彼岸) service in the fall. While there may be many meanings and reasons behind observing these Buddhist traditions, there are two that I would like to focus on in this article. They include (1) acknowledging life's impermanence and most importantly, (2) reflecting on the importance of our Buddhist practice.

(1) Recognizing Life's Transience

There are certain Buddhist customs, including those mentioned above, that remind me of the notion of *shogyo mujo* (諸行無常), or in English, "the impermanence of worldly things". I first learned this concept in college when training to become a priest. We are made aware of this impermanence in our daily lives, ranging from daily tasks that we do (e.g. watering plants to prevent them from wilting) to happenings that we hear about from others that are beyond our control (e.g. the unexpected deaths we hear about on the news). However, it is often funerals and memorial services that amplify this notion of impermanence. They evoke a stronger sentiment because of our direct connection to the deceased. It also forces us to face and acknowledge that life on this earth, including our own, is transient.

Throughout my approximate 50-year career as a minister, I have always reflected on this notion of impermanence as a way to help me understand death as a sad, but unavoidable end to the course of one's life. However, no matter how many funerals I have attended or conducted, it remains one of the most difficult tasks that I must do as a priest.

(2) The Importance of One's Buddhist Practice

As previously mentioned, many Buddhist customs focus on expressing gratitude and remembering those that have passed. However, some people tend to focus too much on this idea. In fact, many spend little or no time understanding the significance that these traditions play in furthering a person's Buddhist practice and faith.

Many of Nichiren Shonin's writings include letters he wrote to his followers who expressed their individual concerns about reaching Enlightenment. As many of you know, in Buddhism we believe that the deceased goes on a 49-day journey after their death, where they will reflect on their lifetime of memories. They will be reminded of the most joyous moments of their life, as well as some of the difficult times. Nichiren Shonin knew of the hardships that one might face throughout this journey, as explained in a letter to one of his followers:

"I, Nichiren, am the world's utmost devotee of the Lotus Sutra. If you pass away after me, remember that there are many trials that you must undergo (throughout your 49-day journey). Pass each trial by declaring in front of the judge that you are the follower of Nichiren, the world's utmost devotee of the Lotus Sutra. When you must cross the fast ripples of the deep river, the Lotus Sutra will become your boat. When you must climb the treacherous mountains, it will become your vehicle. And when you must travel along a dark road, it will become that glimmer of light in the darkness. I, Nichiren, will promise to wait for you at the entrance to the Northeast gate to Enlightenment, so that you do not lose your way."

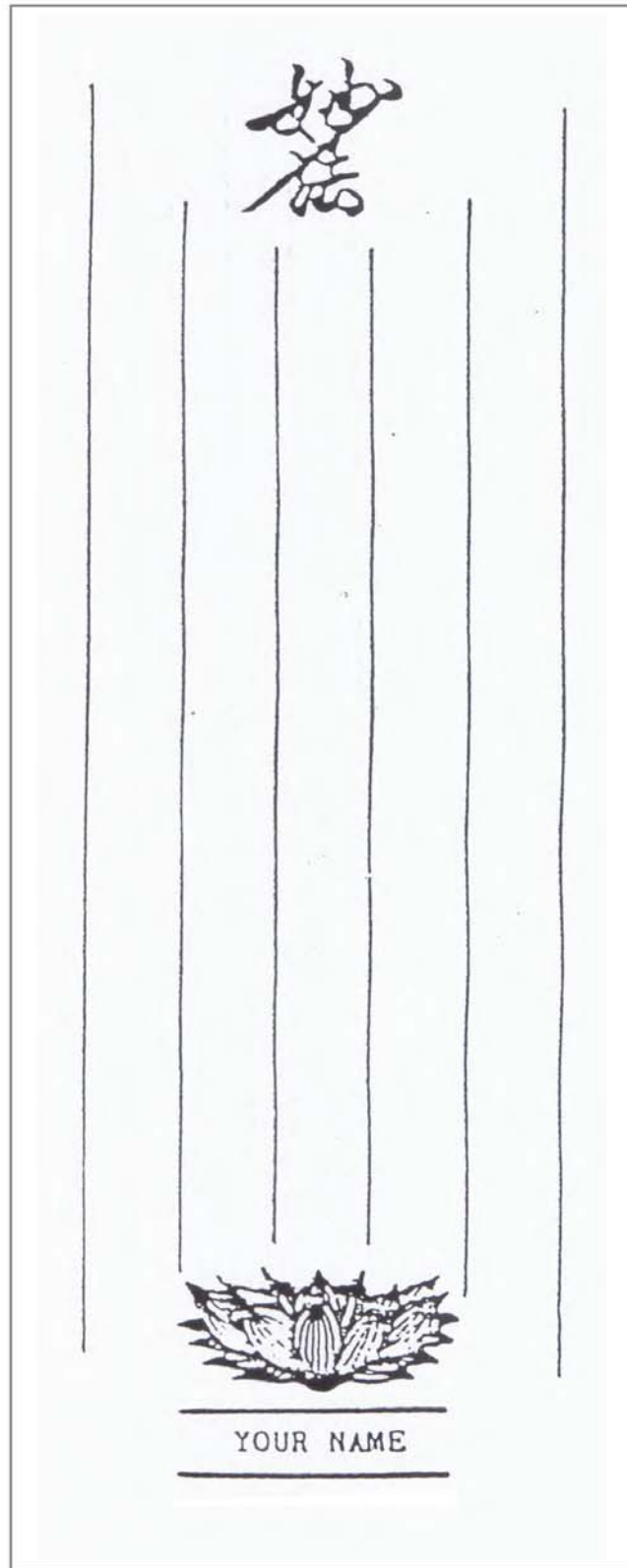
Nichiren Shonin provides positive reassurance in his letter thus far. Yet his tone changes in the subsequent lines, informing the individual of consequences that could result from lack of Buddhist practice and faith. He continues:

"However, I must warn you of the importance of having faith (in the *Lotus Sutra*). An individual lacking piety should not expect to receive help upon claiming to be Nichiren's follower. They will enter into the suffering world as quickly as the large rock that tumbles down the cliff, and the raindrops that fall from the sky and hit the earth."

Nichiren Shonin's statement directly relates to the teachings in Chapter 6 of the *Lotus Sutra*. It states that while everyone has the potential to become the Buddha, whether or not the individual achieves enlightenment depends on his or her level of commitment to practicing Buddhism. The hope is that they do not just rely on praying during services at the temple, but also make an effort to individually practice Buddhism in their daily lives.

Since an individual's life is transient, we have a limited time (i.e. our individual lifespan) in which we can practice our faith in this world. I am hoping that many of you will try to incorporate both of these ideas as you continue to practice and find ways to deepen your faith in Buddhism.

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.



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YOUR NAME

❖ Japanese Food Sale (pre-sale) ❖

Saturday, October 14, 2017

11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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

Keep this top portion for your records.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Price X</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	= <u>Total Cost</u>
Agesushi	\$ 6.00	-----	-----
Barasushi	\$ 5.00	-----	-----
Bento	\$10.00	-----	-----
Curry Rice	\$ 6.00	-----	-----
Ruby's Chicken Salad	\$ 5.00	-----	-----
Spam Musubi	\$ 4.00	-----	-----
Teriyaki Beef Sandwich	\$ 5.00	-----	-----
Teriyaki Chicken	\$ 7.00	-----	-----
Udon	\$ 5.00	-----	-----
TOTAL			-----

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To place an order, please visit our website at www.sacramentonichirenchurch.org or complete the form below & mail it along with your check made payable to "Sacramento Nichiren Buddhist Church" to the church by Monday, September 25, 2017.

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
E-Mail _____

<u>Item</u>	<u>Price X</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	= <u>Total Cost</u>
Agesushi	\$ 6.00	-----	-----
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TOTAL			-----