

NICHIREN NEWS

November, 2018

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November, 2018

4	—	no service
11	11:30am	Komatsuara Kaji Kito
18	—	no service
25	—	no service

December, 2018

2	—	no service
9	—	no service
15	8:00am	Mochi Tsuki
16	11:30am	Kaji Kito
16	noon	Church meeting
23	9:00am	End of year clean up
30	—	no service
31	11:00pm	End of year service (Joya)

January, 2019

1	12:00am	New Year service
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CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please use the enclosed envelope to send in your Church membership dues. The dues are still only \$240 per year.

FUTINKAI MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues for the Fujinkai are \$10 per year. Please send your dues to the Church.

FALL FOOD BAZAAR

Thanks to all members, family & friends who helped to make the Fall Food Bazaar a great success.

CHURCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

- ▶ Discussed the Fall Food Bazaar preparations.
- ▶ Summer Bazaar is on June 8-9, 2019. Agreed to increase prices by \$1 each & change the time to 11am to 4pm as we get very little customers after that time.

MOCHI TSUKI

The annual mochi tsuki will take place on Saturday, December 15, 2018. The cost is \$6.00 per pound for regular mochi & kasane; \$7.00 per pound for an-mochi. Pick up is between 11:00am and 1:00pm. To purchase mochi, you may mail in the mochi order form, order with a credit card through the church website:

www.sacramentonichirechurch.org by December 8, 2018. All church members and friends are asked to help beginning at 8:00am on December 15, 2018.

2019

MEMORIAL SERVICES

1 st year	2018
3 rd year	2017
7 th year	2013
13 th year	2007
17 th year	2003
23 rd year	1997
27 th year	1993
33 rd year	1987
37 th year	1983
43 rd year	1977
50 th year	1970

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

Ohigan: Susumu Fujiwara/\$40;; Joe Hitomi/\$20; Lily Hitomi/\$30; Yoshiko Hitomi/\$50; John Hughes/\$150; Mary Hughes/\$100; Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$40; Takami Lau/\$30; Keiko Lucas/\$50; Kathy Mine/\$30; Takashi Mizuno/\$50; Kinjiro Nakatogawa/\$25; Fusako Okamoto/\$30; Yurimi Sawamura/\$30; Gail & Dave Tanaka/\$30; Linda Tomita/\$50; Brian Tsuda/\$40; Hideko Tsuetaki/\$50; Chiharu Yamada/\$20

Building Fund: Norma Redman/\$25; Liz Kono/\$300

Memorial:

In memory of Sadako & Katashi Fujiwara-Susumu Fujiwara/\$100, Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$100;

In memory of Alfred Kato-Liz Kono/\$100, Peter Kato/\$50;

In memory of Emiko Nagasawa-R.C. Hironaka/\$30, Mike & Susan Tamai/\$30, Hideko Tsuetaki/\$30, Todd Nagasawa/\$50 (49th day memorial service)

In memory of Saburo Kawamura-Mike & Susan Tamai/\$30

Membership Dues: Betsi Anne Nagasawa/\$20 & \$20

Bazaar Fund: Takashi Mizuno/\$50; Thomas Murray/\$133

Special Donation: Fusako Okamoto/flowers for the Temple;

Reflecting on My *Shugyou* (Part 3)

Kenjo Igarashi

The farmer's child was leading me to the path that would take me to Lake Motosuko, my next destination. Because the child had grown up in the area, he knew the area very well and swiftly led the way. He was so fast that it was difficult for me to keep up with him. When we finally reached the National Route, I remember feeling a moment of relief from seeing all the cars passing by—a scene that differed greatly from the miles of farmland that I had passed by for hours on end. After thanking the child, I continued along the National Route for some time and entered a long tunnel, which at the time lacked adequate lighting. I felt extremely frightened walking in this dark tunnel, yet as I exited, I was greeted by Lake Motosuko, glimmering underneath the bright blue sky. Given that I was witnessing this beautiful scenery following a typhoon, it is possible that the rain droplets that had not yet evaporated accentuated the vivid colors. I was not only moved, but also left feeling small when I saw Mt. Fuji standing so tall and majestically across the lake. I continued along the National Route as I approached the lakeshore and also the base of Mt. Fuji. When I arrived at the lakeshore, I saw many people enjoying their time on their boats and swimming in the lake. I took a moment to look at myself and reflect on my own situation—my Buddhist clothing that I was wearing was covered in mud, my feet were in pain, and I had no money. But in this moment, I felt a sense of happiness, which probably differed from those that were enjoying their time in the lake. I remember tears streaming down my face as I felt gratitude for having been granted this opportunity to undergo my *shugyou*.

I left Lake Motosuko and continued along the National Route. As I approached Lake Shojin, I noticed that some people were taking pictures of me. I raised the brim of my *tendai-gasa* and realized that they were foreign tourists who seemed to be intrigued by me. I became hopeful that my Buddhist clothing would lead them to at least think about Buddhism. It may have been a literal representation of a Buddhist phrase, “*igi soku buppou*”, which means that the Buddha or Dharma is within you and however you choose to present yourself reflects that.

I stopped by a small store near Lake Shojin that was selling souvenirs among other items. I noticed that the store had an outdoor faucet and decided to ask the old man sitting next to it if I could take a sip of water from it. As I approached him, he was quick to tell me that he thought I was an elderly priest since not many young priests undergo *angya* training (walking while chanting the sutra and beating the handheld taiko drum) anymore. The old man kindly offered me milk and a Japanese pastry. Before parting with him, he gave me directions to my next destination and warned me to be careful, as night was quickly approaching.

As the sky darkened, I found myself near Aokigahara Forest, also known as the “suicide forest” in Japan, since many individuals are known to commit suicide there. I decided to continue along the long path surrounding the forest. I also came to terms with the fact that I would probably not be able to leave that area in time to sleep in a more pleasant location that night. I could feel that I was being surrounded and followed by the lingering spirits of individuals who had passed away in the forest and proceeded to pray for them. I continued walking and praying for the rest of the night, though I have little recollection of that evening. As the sun rose, I remember feeling the need to take a break and leaned against a tree near the edge of the forest to sleep for a few hours before continuing my *shugyou*.

For the next five days, I continued *takuhatsu* (stopping and praying in front of each house and if possible, receiving a donation in return) during the day. During my *angya* training, I also made sure to stop by and pray for any small stupas I encountered along the roadside, which were for people who had passed away from car accidents. At night, I would find the closest and empty train station or bus stops, or sometimes parks, and sleep on the benches. Back then it was still not as common to find homeless individuals sleeping on park benches. I remember one time a surprised police officer woke me up to tell me that I could not sleep on the park bench. When I told him that I was in the middle of a *shugyou*, he told me that though he was technically not allowed to do this, he would let me sleep at the small neighborhood police station for the night. I continued to encounter many people during my training, including a time when a truck driver pulled over to offer me a ride—I kindly refused explaining once again my *shugyou*. However, there were also moments when I was refused food for entering a tiny restaurant in my muddy Buddhist clothing.

While it has been several decades since I completed this training and made my way back to Tokyo, I believe that the kindness I encountered from so many people, the spirits I prayed for, and the benefits I accumulated during my training have contributed to helping me live the life that I live today. To this day, I pray for these individuals and spirits everyday. I also feel gratitude and appreciation towards the Buddha, Nichiren Shonin, *shotenzerjin*, and other deities, who have allowed me to undergo and complete this and other trainings that I would subsequently undergo. However, Buddhist training for lay members is more an accumulation of your daily actions, your prayers, being aware of your surroundings, and taking the time to help others in need. I personally undergo these trainings not only for myself, but also so that I can help others through the knowledge that I have gained from them. I am hoping that this three-part series has helped people to not only learn about one of my previous trainings, but also to reflect on ways that they themselves could pursue their own Buddhist practice.