

# NICHIREN NEWS

MARCH, 2022

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

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March 2022

5	---	no service
13	11:30am	Kaji Kito
13	noon	Church cleaning
20	---	no service
27	11:30am	Ohigan service
27	noon	Church meeting

### April, 2022

3	---	no service
10	11:30am	Hanamatsuri
17	---	no service
24	11:30am	Kaishu-e and Kaji Kito
24	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 27, 2022 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 10, 2022 at 11:30am.

## CHURCH CLEANING

Beginning in March, 2022 instead of hiring a custodian to clean the Church, we are asking Church members and friends to help clean the temple and classroom building.

We plan to do this once a month except on months when we have special events such as the bazaars when we might need to schedule an extra day.

Our first date is Sunday, March 13, 2022 after the Church service. The next date will be noted on the Church website.

## CHURCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 30, 2022

- ◆ Discussed making takuan for sale. Fusako Okamoto already made and donated takuan/jams which are available for sale, and are in the Church fridge.
- ◆ Discussed the summer bazaar. The plan is to have a one-day pre-sale event combined with a rummage sale.
- ◆ Noted that the large Church refrigerator was repaired.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

### Mochi Tsuki:

Ruby & Gary Gotow/\$40; Gail & Dave Tanaka/\$100 (for rice & supplies); Sharon Wong Lerner/\$25

### Refrigerator:

Mihoko Igarashi/\$500

## Acknowledgment continued:

### Membership - \$240 per year:

Laurie Akiyama; Renee Dennis; Ruby & Gary Gotow; Joe Hitomi; John Hughes; Kyomi Igarashi; Elizabeth Nettle; Steven Saxton; Dave & Gail Tanaka; Betsi Ann Nagasawa/\$40

### Memorial:

Steve Saxton/\$60 in memory of Nate Saxton; In memory of Shigeko Tanaka: Gail & Dave Tanaka/\$200, Kathy Mine/\$30 & Tsutomi Ota/\$25.

### Special Donation:

Renee Dennis/\$20; Joe Hitomi/\$660; Joe Hitomi/\$648.06 (supplies for bazaars/church maintenance, & stamps); Yoshiko Hitomi (beans & candy for Setsubun); John Hughes/\$100 (pest control); Mihoko Igarashi/flowers; Elizabeth Nettle/\$500; Fusako Okamoto/tsukemono, jams & flowers



## The Similarities Between Ohigan and Volunteering

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.

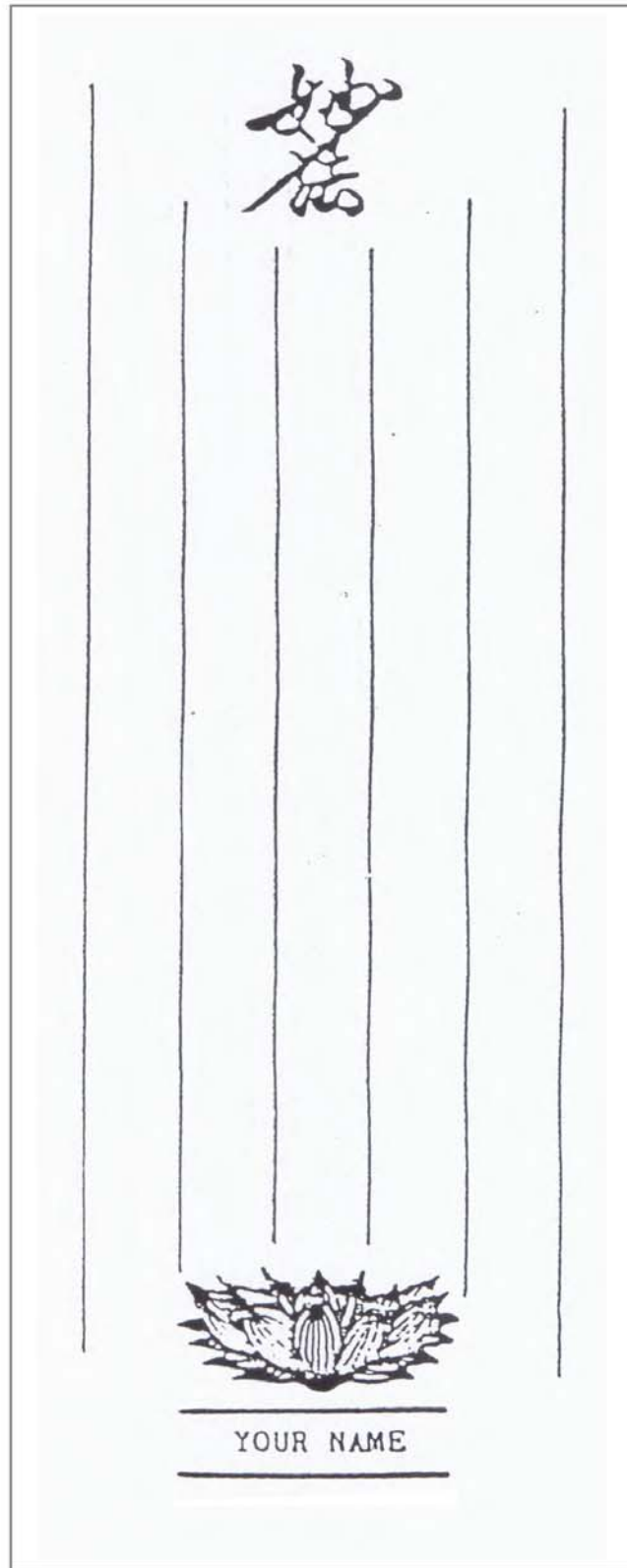
However, even when we are living in such a world, we know that there are different degrees of suffering that we experience even within the same realm, as that of human beings. As stated before, this is due to the differing amounts of bad karma that we carry with us. However, at the same time, we can 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".

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