

# NICHIREN NEWS

JANUARY, 2023

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~ Happy New Year ~

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January, 2023

1	12:00am	New Year service
8	---	no service
15	---	no service
22	11:30am	Kaji Kito
22	noon	Church meeting m
29	11:00am	Tsuito-e
29	noon	New Year Party

### February, 2023

5	11:30am	Setsubun
12	---	no service
19	---	no service
26	---	no service

## SETSUBUN

The Setsubun service will be held on **Sunday, February 5, 2023** at 11:30am. This is a special service for members who were born in the year of the Rabbit (12, 24, 36, 48, 60, 72, 84, 96 years old). As always, we will have a raffle after the service so please bring "paper products" for the raffle.

## MOCHI TSUKI

Thanks to all the Church members, family & friends for their hard work during our annual mochi tsuki. The mochi tsuki took place on Saturday, December 17, 2022.

Extra frozen mochi is on sale for \$6.00 for packages of 8 pieces. Please contact the Church if you are interested in purchasing mochi.

## CHURCH NEW YEAR PARTY

The annual Church New Year party will be held at noon on **Sunday, January 29, 2023** at the Church. The luncheon is \$25 per person (12 & under are free). If you would like to attend, please call the Church.

A memorial service for Church members will be held before the party. The service is at 11:00am at the Church.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

### Mochi Tsuki:

Yoshiko Hitomi/mochi cutter (\$122.22); Ruby Gotow & Fusako Okamoto/an supplies & preparation; Fusako Okamoto/tsukemono & jams; Kiyoko Kuwabara/supplies, containers, plastic bags & lunch  
Rice donations: Yoshiko Hitomi (50 lb); Merry Hitomi (25 lb); Jane Hitomi (25 lb); Lily Hitomi (25 lb); Reverend Igarashi (25 lb); Kiyoko Kuwabara (50 lb)

### Membership-\$240:

Yoshiko Hitomi; John Hughes; Janet Kyotani; Takashi Mizuno; Deandra Murray; Fusako Okamoto  
**Memorial:**

Dave Tanaka/\$200 in memory of Shigeko Tanaka

### Special donations:

Ann Akiyama/\$10; Laurie Akiyama/\$10; Joe Hitomi/\$1,585 (special donations, bazaar supplies, postage stamps); John Hughes/pest control/(\$100); Peter Kato/\$50; Barbara Nakatomi/\$25;

### Acknowledgement continued:

Fusako Okamoto/flowers for Church services & narazuke

### Building Fund:

Ann Akiyama/\$250; Laurie Akiyama/\$250; Ruby Gotow/\$250; Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$250; Takashi Mizuno

Fujinkai membership: Yoshiko Hitomi/\$10; Fusako Okamoto/\$20



# **Happy New Year everyone!**

In Japan, it is customary to visit the temple on New Years day and pray for your family's health and happiness. In this newsletter, I would like to talk about the meaning of praying on New Years day.

To celebrate the new years and to pray for peace, happiness, and health on New Years day is called "shu shou e" in Japanese. The origins of this custom go back to Ancient China where the ceremony was first practiced. The first written record of this ceremony in Japan is said to have been held at the temple built under the emperor of the time in AD759. After AD765, every prefecture had a big temple where these ceremonies could also be held. During that time, the people prayed for the country's peace and also for good harvest.

In AD827 "shu shou e", which had once been restricted to certain temples, was now publicly given permission to be practiced in several other temples. Through the centuries, it is said that people made a custom to practice "shu shou e" to mainly pray for one's personal benefits. Aside from "shu shou e", it was customary in every prefecture to pray every new years day at a local shrine. During the Edo Period (1600s), people started believing that by praying, they would be blessed with good luck and happiness.

In present day Japan, the "shu shou e" has been renamed "hatsu mou de" due to the incorporation of different styles of praying that have been practiced throughout Japanese history. In any case, the way that the people pray for peace and happiness has not changed. We will gain protection and benefits from the Buddha if we consciously hope for this peace and happiness and work towards achieving this goal.

At our temple, we have a purification service every month. By striving to attend the services and pray, you will be able to obtain benefits from the Buddha. Therefore, this year, let's make an effort to attend these services as I will be purifying your family alters and praying for your family's happiness from the temple at midnight on New Years day.