

# NICHIREN NEWS

MARCH, 2024

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

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March 2024

3	---	no service
10	11:30am	Sunday service
10	noon	Church meeting
17	---	no service
24	11:30am	Ohigan service
31	11:30am	Kaji Kito
31	noon	Church meeting

### April, 2024

7	---	no service
14	11:30am	Hanamatsuri (Buddha's birthday)
18	TBA	Prep/Cooking for Golf Tournament
18	TBA	Cooking for Golf Tournament
21	---	no service
28	11:30am	Kaishu-e (Nichiren order founding day)
28	11:30am	Kaji Kito
28	noon	Church meeting

## UPCOMING EVENTS - 2024

April 18 - Golf Tournament  
May 18 - Rummage Sale  
June 8 - Summer Food Sale  
September 21 - Rummage Sale  
October 12 - Fall Food Sale  
December 14 - Mochi Tsuki

## HANAMATSURI

Sakyamuni Buddha was born on April 8. Hanamatsuri is the celebration of his birth. The Hanamatsuri service will be held on **Sunday, April 14, 2024 at 11:30am.**

## 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 14, 2024 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.

## CHURCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 14, 2024

- Discussion on repairs to home & garage (paint, dry rot & fence)
- Agreed to add upcoming events to future newsletters.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

### Church Membership - \$240 per year:

Gary & Ruby Gotow; Merry Hitomi; Gail & Dave Tanaka

### Memorial:

Gail & Dave Tanaka/\$50 - in memory of Yozo Yamada; Jonathan Nettle, Liz Nettle & Amber Webb/\$200 - in memory of Yukio Aoki & Don Webb

## Acknowledgments continued:

### New Year Party:

Lily Hitomi/\$125; Merry Hitomi/\$100; Mihoko Igarashi/\$100; Barbara Tanaka/\$40; Gail & Dave Tanaka/\$50; Brian Tsuda/\$40

### Setsubun:

Yoshiko Hitomi (soy beans, candy); Paper Products: Ruby Gotow; Lily Hitomi; Merry & Yoshiko Hitomi; John & Mary Hughes; Mihoko Igarashi; Kiyoko Kuwabara; Keiko Lucas; Fusako Okamoto

### Special Donation:

John Hughes/\$100 for pest control; Jonathan Nettle, Liz Nettle & Amber Webb/\$100; Fusako Okamoto/flowers



## **Higan-e**

Twice a year, we experience equinoxes, signifying the beginning of either fall or spring. As most may know, this is a significant time for Buddhists as well, who practice those three days before and after the equinox. Higan, as this is called, is a time, when we practice in order for our mind to leave this shore and cross the river of suffering to reach the other shore of enlightenment. During this time of shumbun (spring equinox) and shubun (fall equinox), the length of morning and night is the same and as Buddhists, we must learn to appreciate that midway between the penance and pleasure of life through practice. We must remember that this time of higan is a time for both praying for ourselves and holding memorial services for our ancestors.

Whenever memorial services are held for one's ancestors, the young people always tend to ask, "Is this necessary?" The same question is often asked in Japan, too, by the younger generation.

Memorial services are not held just to satisfy one's ego and to please the ancestors. Some people think that by having a memorial service, they have done their duty and find satisfaction in this belief. Many people also think that when a memorial service is held, prayers are simply offered for the benefit of the ancestors; however, this is not true. When we place ourselves before the altar, we are also praying for our own awareness and spiritual growth.

Nichiren Shonin said, in a letter addressed to his follower, Abutsubo, "There is no finer vehicle of precious truth than the faith of a man or woman who believes in the truth of the Lotus Sutra. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor. If you recite 'Namu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo', your body becomes the vehicle of precious truth for you are the Buddha of infinite understanding and truth."

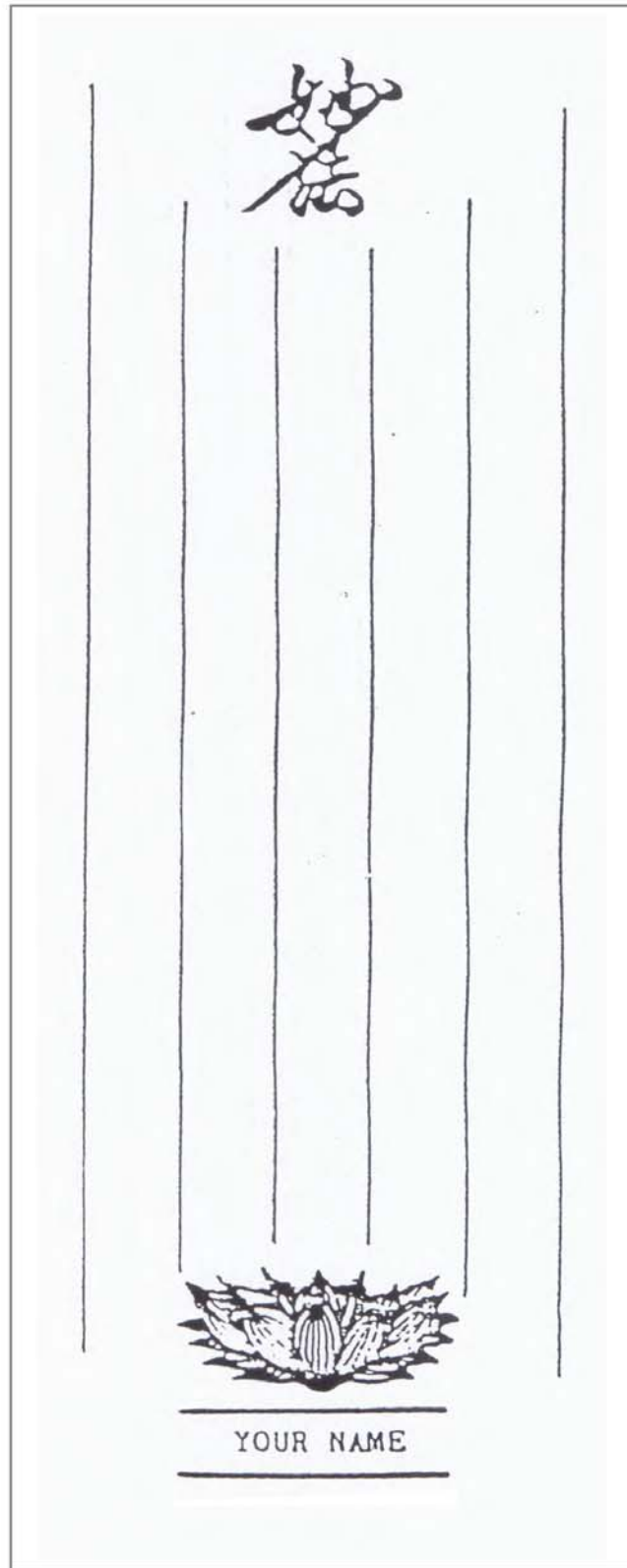
When we recite the Sutra with Nichiren Shonin's words in mind, we realize that Buddha dwells in our hearts. Our ancestors dwell in our hearts as well, always sharing our trials and joys.

Money is always good to have but even without it, if your family is healthy and happy you can be sure that your ancestors are resting in peace. No matter how wealthy or poor you may be, if no problems occur in your family, your ancestors are also happy and at peace.

Offering of prayers through the recitation of the Sutra does not mean that you are merely offering prayers to something you cannot see nor understand. You are offering prayers to your innermost self and realizing your infinite love and understanding. You feel grateful for your life, blessed with goodness and moved by the oneness of you and your ancestors. With this awareness you extend the benefits of your prayers to others.

With infinite love and understanding you are at peace. If you are at peace, your ancestors will rest in peace. If your ancestors are at peace, you will be at peace. Your life cannot help but be blessed with goodness. This is the teaching of the Lotus Sutra. Attaining this awareness is the true purpose of having memorial services.

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