

SACRAMENTO NICHIREN NEWS

Sacramento Nichiren Buddhist Church

July 2025

5191 24th Street, Sacramento, CA, 95822 | (916) 456-8371 | www.sacramentonichirenchurch.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 2025

6	11:30am	Sunday Service
13	11:30am	Kaji Kito
16	9:00am	Rummage Sale Prep: Put up canopies; set up tables
17	9:00am	Rummage Sale Prep: Set Up
18	9:00am	Rummage Sale Prep: Set Up
19	8:00am -3:00pm	Rummage Sale (Day 1)
20	9:00am -2:00pm	Rummage Sale (Day 2)
27	11:30am	Obon Service
		Church Meeting

AUGUST 2025

3	11:30am	Sunday Service
10	11:30am	Sunday Service
17	—	No Service
24	11:30am	Kaji Kito
31	11:30am	Matsubagayatsu Persecution Service
		Church Meeting

OBON SERVICE

JULY 27TH, 2025
(SUNDAY AT 11:30AM)

The Obon service is a time for us to honor the spirits of our ancestors. We will welcome them back as they pay a visit to our families.

Please write the names of your deceased family members on the enclosed form and return it to the Church before the service.

RUMMAGE SALE

JULY 19 - 20, 2025
(SATURDAY / SUNDAY)

We will have one large rummage sale this year. Church members, family, and friends are asked to help. Please see the "Calendar of Events" for details.

Thank you to those that have already brought in their donations. We will continue to accept them until **July 12th**. Please see the Church website or contact the Church for more details.

SUMMER FOOD SALE

Thank you very much to everyone that helped make this year's summer food sale a success again! We appreciate everyone's help, especially with the preparation and sale.

The net profit was \$11,820.07. (total profit was \$14,711 with \$2,890.93 in expenses.)

FALL FOOD SALE

OCTOBER 11TH, 2025
(SATURDAY)

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming fall food sale in October. More information will be provided starting late August.

CHURCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

MAY 25, 2025

- Discussed the schedule for the summer food sale

JUNE 8, 2025

- Discussed and finalized the total number of orders placed for the summer food sale

JUNE 29, 2025

- Discussed details for the upcoming rummage sale

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge our generous donations.

MEMBERSHIP DUES (\$240)
Yurimi Sawamura; Renee Dennis/\$20.

SPECIAL DONATIONS
Fusako Okamoto/flowers; Yoshiko Hitomi/flowers; Sharon Okamoto/flowers; Chiharu Yamada/\$20; John Hughes/\$100 (pest control); Kiyoko Kuwabara/manju; Mary Hughes/chocolate.

OHIGAN AND HANAMATSURI
Keiko Lucas/\$150; Elizabeth Nettle/\$60.

EITAIKYO
Brian Tsuda/\$40.

SUMMER FOOD SALE DONATIONS
(Note: The monetary value is not provided for all items and donations listed below.)
Fusako Okamoto/\$300, fukujinzuke, takuan, narazuke, and jam; Dearthra Murray/ \$51; Yoshiko Hitomi/\$234.25 (daikon tsukemono, umeboshi, plants, and donuts); Joe Hitomi/\$234 (charcoal); Takashi Mizuno/\$100; Lily Hitomi/\$389.82 (sandwich bread and wraps, chicken container/buckets, udon broth containers, plastic table cloths, plastic bags for veggies, #2 trays); Ruby Gotow/macaroni (6 lbs), salad ingredients, and bottled water; Brain Tsuda/ sugar (2X 10 lb bags); Mary Hughes/eggs (3 dozen); Kiyoko Kuwabara/bento containers (3X 75 containers) and chicken cartons (2X).

The Importance of Making “Connections” (*En*) in Buddhism

Kenjo Igarashi

I hope everyone is doing well and finding ways to stay cool as we make our way into the summer months of Sacramento. Despite the changing weather, like many, I have a set routine that stays consistent throughout the year. Come to think of it, my routine has not changed for several years, even decades! My morning routine starts with waking up at 3:00am, preparing food offerings for the various altars, then going to the temple for my prayer at 3:30am. I should mention that at the Nichiren Shu 100-day ascetic *aragyō* training, we would start with “water prayer” at 3:00am, then move to the main temple at 4:00am to continue with chanting the sutra. Part of my routine is influenced by my *aragyō* training – even now, I start by chanting Nichiren Shonin’s *kito* prayer. I subsequently chant one full volume of the *Lotus Sutra* (8 volumes), taking me a total of eight days to cycle through the whole sutra. I finish my prayer at 5:00am, eat breakfast, then go on my daily hour-long walk at 6:00am.

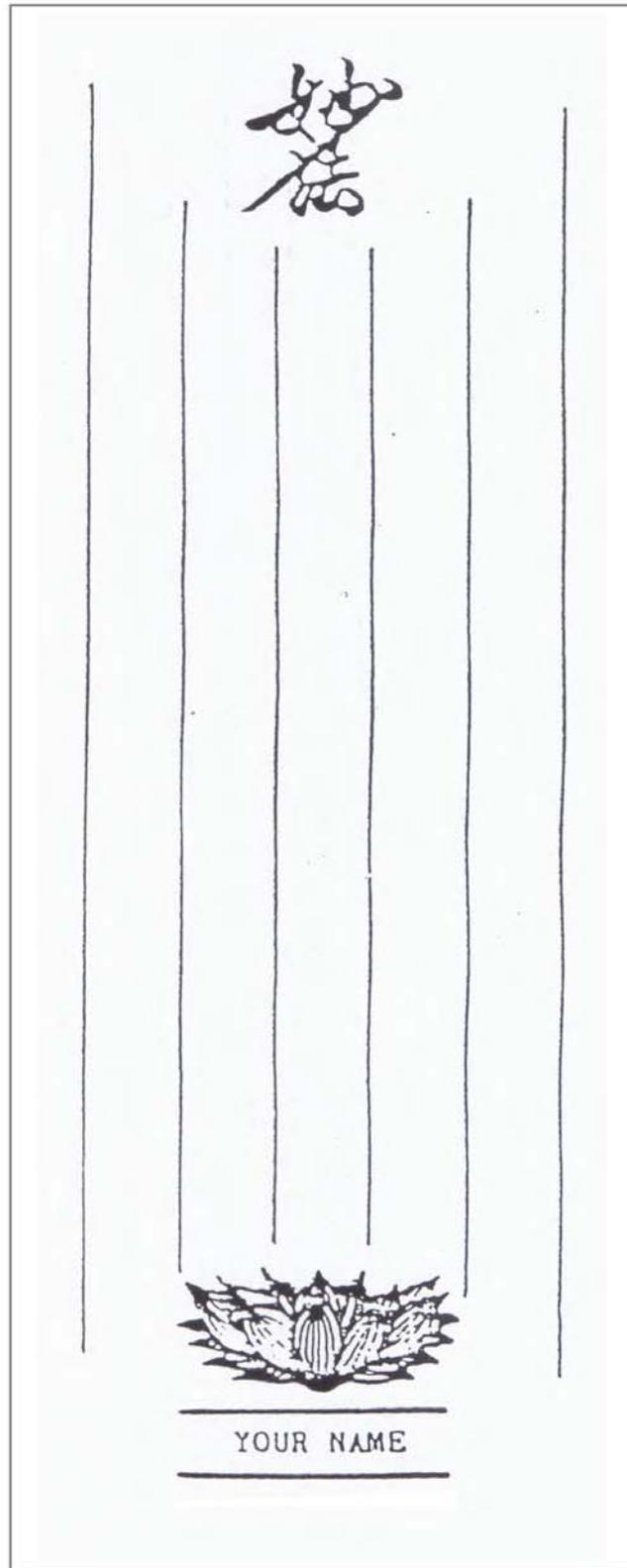
Admittedly, I sometimes find myself going through some of the movements, like preparing for my walk, without too much thought. In a way, it has become somewhat of a habit. For my walks, I take the exact same path, expect to be at certain checkpoints at a particular time, and greet the same neighbors. But throughout the years of continuing my routine, I have also found the importance of taking the time to notice certain aspects that were not as obvious before. For example, it was surprising to realize how many coins I was able to spot on the side of the road during my walks. Of course, most of these coins were pennies, and very rarely would I spot a quarter. Whenever I would find these coins, I would bring them back to the temple and put them into the “Offering Box” that we have at the entrance. Last year, when Mr. Joe Hitomi, the temple treasurer, opened the “Offering Box” for the first time in several years, I was surprised to hear that out of the >\$1,200 in donations, there were >\$40 in just coins!

Many may ask why I take the time to put these coins into the “Offering Box”. My reason for doing this has to do with the following Japanese Buddhist phrase: “*en naki shujyō wa doshigatashi*” (縁なき衆生は度し難し). This is commonly translated as “those who do not have connections to the Buddha’s teachings or are unwilling to accept them, will not be saved”. This translation has somewhat of a negative connotation. However, I would like to propose a slightly different interpretation based off of my studies of Buddhist literature, my practice, and my experience as a minister in the US. It is that “unfortunately, those who do not have opportunities to learn about the teachings of the Buddha will have difficulty making connections to and reaping the benefits of these teachings”. This “connection” (*en*) is extremely difficult to make, especially in countries like the US, where Buddhism is of course not the predominant religion. We have to put in extra effort so that more of these opportunities and thus connections can be made. My hope is that this seemingly simple action of placing these coins into the “Offering Box” will help these individuals who unknowingly dropped these coins, make these connections to the Buddha. In a way, I hope to be the in-between of these people and the Buddha’s teachings. Through this connection that I have helped make, my wish is that they will have opportunities maybe later in this life, and if not, their next life or thereafter, to learn about and accept the teachings of the Buddha. This same idea applies to those that hear, for example, the chanting of the sutra as they walk by the temple or the sound of the taiko drums during our Sunday Service. All these actions are a way for anyone to initiate that connection with the Buddha’s teachings.

We, as Buddhists, are very fortunate to have found the Buddha’s teachings in this lifetime. However, we should not take this for granted – making this connection is not enough. We have to strengthen this connection by incorporating the teachings of the Buddha and Nichiren Shonin into our daily lives by, for example, attending the Sunday Services. We are also deemed with the task of helping people who lack these opportunities to make these connections to Buddha’s teachings.

As you can see, I was able to find purpose in my seemingly mundane walking routine. I hope that many of you will take this time to reflect on your daily life or routine, trying to find more ways to strengthen your connection to the Buddha’s and Nichiren Shonin’s teachings. Through this, my additional hope is that you may also find ways to help others initiate this connection as well.

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