

NICHIREN NEWS

March, 2016

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

Calendar of Events

March 2016

| | | |
|----|---------|----------------|
| 6 | --- | no service |
| 13 | --- | no service |
| 20 | 11:30am | Kaji Kito |
| 20 | noon | Church meeting |
| 27 | 11:30am | Ohigan service |

April, 2016

| | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 3 | --- | no service |
| 10 | 11:30am | Hanamatsuri |
| 17 | --- | no service |
| 24 | 11:30am | Kaishu-e (Nichiren order founding day) 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, 2016 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, 2016 at 11:30am**.

new Year Party

The Church New Year Party was held at the Church on Sunday, January 31, 2016. Many thanks to the Fujinkai, Church members & friends who prepared the delicious luncheon.

Church Meeting Highlights--1/3/16

- Discussed the New Year Party preparations
- The building fund has \$2,300 in it, the minimum balance for the bank account must be \$2,500 (money will be transferred to the account).
- Discussed the letter which needs to be mailed to the Japan headquarters regarding the hiring agreement with the Reverend.

Church Meeting Highlights--2/14/16

- Discussed the letter which must be mailed to Japan. John Hughes drafted a response.
- Discussed a neighbor's tree which hangs over the Church property. We need to wait for the neighbor to return (out of town) before anything is decided.
- Discussed the Church tax ID number. John Hughes is gathering data to complete the application.

Church Meeting Highlights--2/28/16

- Discussed the Church tax ID number.
- Discussed the neighbor's tree. Joe will speak with the neighbor.

Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from the following:

Temple: Offering Box - \$407

Fujinkai: Dag Nakatogawa/\$25; Fusako Okamoto/\$10 membership

Memorial: Shizuko Carr/\$50 (in memory of Bob Carr & the Kawakami family)

Acknowledgment

(continued):

New Year Party: Shizuko Carr/\$20; Susumu Fujiwara/\$20; Joe Hitomi/\$35; Kanji Hitomi/\$50; Lily Hitomi/\$20; Kenjo Igarashi/\$100; Kazuyo Johnson/\$100; Kiyoko Kuwabara/\$50; Keiko Lucas/\$50; Kevin Lucas/\$100; Fusako Okamoto/\$30; Barbara Tanaka/\$40; Gail Tanaka/\$50; Fred Tonai/\$100; Brian Tsuda/\$20; Yozo Yamada/\$50

New Year Party (raffle prizes):

Susumu Fujiwara; Ruby Gotow; Joe Hitomi; Lily Hitomi; Kanji Hitomi; Igarashi family; Kiyoko Kuwabara; Kathy Mine; Liz Nettle & Amber Webb; Fusako Okamoto; Sugitani & Palmieri family; Susan Tamai; Gail & Dave Tanaka; Shige & Barbara Tanaka; Nobu Tateishi

Setsubun (raffle prizes):

Toshiko Akiyama; Keri Hayakawa; Joe Hitomi; Kanji Hitomi; Lily Hitomi; John Hughes; Mihoko Igarashi; Kiyoko Kuwabara; Kathy Mine; Fusako Okamoto

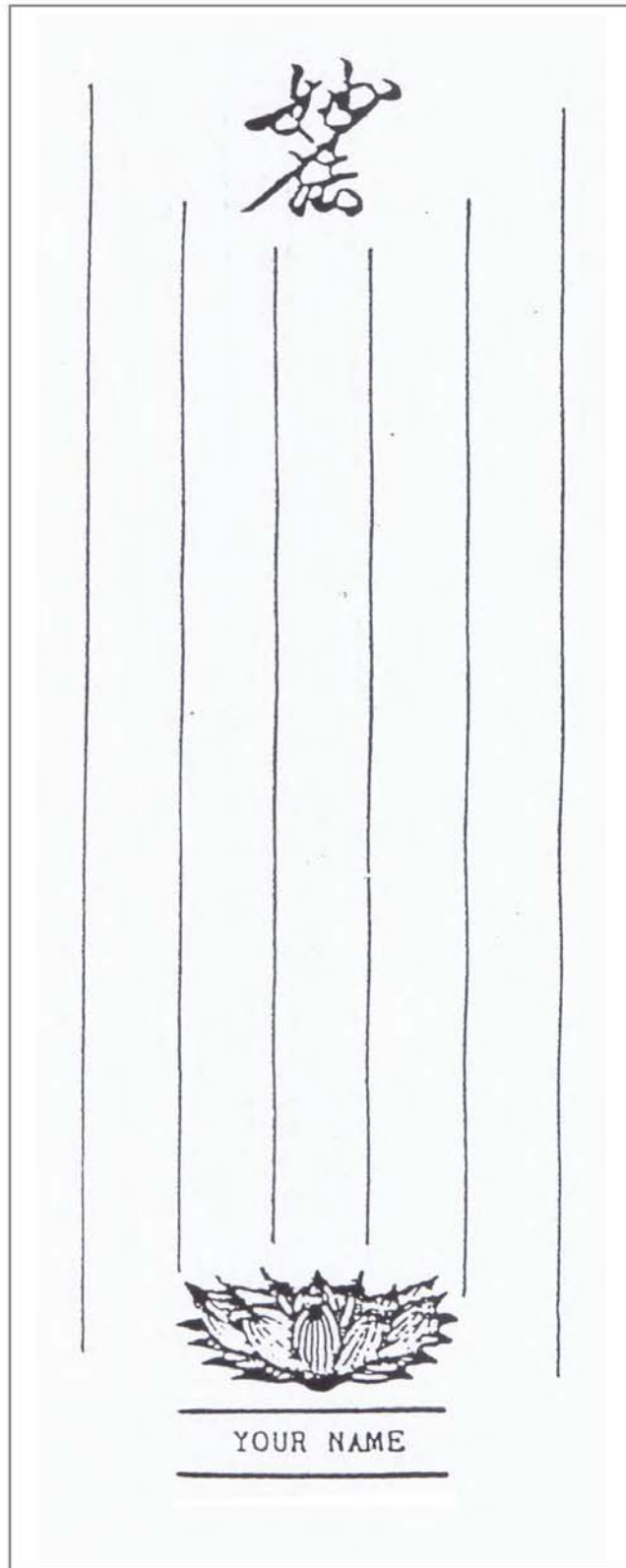
Special Donation:

Shizuko Carr/\$50; Joe Hitomi/matsu; Kanji Hitomi/soy beans and candy for the Setsubun service; Betsi Ann Nagasawa/\$20; Fusako Okamoto/flowers for Sunday services; Steve Saxton/\$60; Mike Tamai/Round Up & a table

Summer Bazaar (2015): Joe Hitomi/\$532; craft sale - \$250

Membership - \$240: Ann Akiyama; Laurie Akiyama; Joe Hitomi; John Hughes; Kathy Mine; Kinjiro Nakatogawa, Toyoko Nakatogawa; Gail Tanaka; Steve Saxton; Yozo Yamada

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.



At the top center of the form is a calligraphic symbol, likely representing the Japanese character for 'spirit' (魂). Below this symbol are two vertical lines that form a narrow column for writing names. At the bottom center of the form is a decorative floral emblem, possibly a lotus flower. Below the emblem is a horizontal line with the text 'YOUR NAME' centered between two more horizontal lines.

The Meaning of Higan

Higan is the practice of leaving our deep attachments in order to reach the world of enlightenment. Specifically, Higan is a practice comprised by six components. They are: charity, observing precepts, perseverance, energy, meditation, and wisdom. There is a story I would like to share with you concerning this practice. In the 9th century, a monk named Kyoukai wrote a series of books called *Nippon Reiiki*. Spanning three volumes long, these books contained stories concerning his experiences that seemed to transcend the logic and understanding of this world. This particular story I would like to share with you comes from this book, in the second volume of the series in the 38th chapter.

During the era in which Emperor Shomu ruled, there was a monk who lived in a temple in the mountains of Maniwa, located in the city of Nara. That monk had told his disciples upon his deathbed, "After my death, you must not open the entrance to my room for three years." Saying this, he passed away. Forty-nine days after his death, a venomous snake had appeared before the deceased monk's door, coiled in place, refusing to move. The disciples quickly realized that this snake was the reincarnation of their master. By chanting towards the snake, the disciples were able to move it, and enter the monk's room. In the room, the disciples discovered thirty kan (currency used at the time, equaling approximately \$30,000 today) saved up and hidden away. Realizing that their master had reincarnated as a venomous snake to protect this money, the disciples used the money to invite many ministers and hold a memorial service for him.

Kyoukai realizes that this particular monk was so desperate to protect his money, that he reincarnated into a snake in order to protect it. Kyoukai says, "No matter how high the mountain, we are able to see its peak. The mountain residing in humans called greed however is so great, that we cannot see its peak." In other words, the greed and desire residing in humans is so vast and ever-growing, that it has no limit. Higan is a very important practice which aims to rid this greed and desire within us.