



GEDATSU COMPANION

GEDATSU CHURCH USA
www.gedatsu-usa.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 News and Announcements
- 4 Around Our Church: Member Activities, Impact of Large-Screen Displays, New *Saito Goma* Plaques
- 6 Dear Reverend: *"Is it wrong to ask God to restore my health?"*
- 7 New series: "Welcome to Gedatsu." Chapter 1 – Gedatsu, a Non-sectarian Religious Study
- 9 Offerings and Upcoming Events

Gedatsu Kongo's
Thought for the Month

"A single word uttered in sincerity is much more powerful than a hundred hollow phrases."

We always communicate with others through language. But you may be hardly aware of the power of words.

Words are unseen, but the words we utter may reduce someone to despair or give her or him the courage to live. When you become aware that your language possesses such power, you will use warm, thoughtful language with everyone.

Hundreds of hollow phrases will never influence people, but a single word uttered from the bottom of your heart will truly affect people in a positive way.

Remember that through your language, you can encourage people to live or discourage them altogether.

JULY 2019

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Thu	4	Church Closed (Independence Day)
Sun	7 10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	14 9:30 am	Appreciation Service / Graduates Honored <i>Obon</i> Service / Regional Board Meeting
Sun	21 1:00 pm	San Jose Branch <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Thu – Sun 25-28		Summer Youth Camp

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Thu	4	Church Closed (Independence Day)
Sun	7 10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service Luncheon for <i>Gedatsu-kai</i> Ambassadors
Sun	14 10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	21 10:00 am	Appreciation Service (Japanese & English) <i>Obon</i> Service / Graduates Honored
Thu – Sun 25-28		Summer Youth Camp in Sacramento
Sun	28 10:00 am	English Appreciation Service L.A. Regional Board Meeting

AUGUST 2019

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sat-Sun 3-4	8:00am	Bus Trip to Reno
Sun	11 9:30 am	<i>Benzaiten</i> Service
	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service Regional Board Meeting
Sun	18 1:00 pm	San Jose Branch <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	25 9:30 am	Appreciation Service Clean-up and prep for Fall Grand Festival
Sat	31 9:30 am	Preparation for Fall Grand Festival
	5:00 pm	70th Anniversary Banquet (Crowne Plaza)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	4 10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sat	10 10:00 am	<i>Tanabata</i> Festival
Sun	11 10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	18 10:00 am	<i>Benzaiten</i> Service (Japanese & English)
Sun	25 10:00 am	English Appreciation Service L.A. Regional Board Meeting
Sat	31	70th Anniversary Celebration (in Sacramento)

Okano Family to Return to Japan

L.A. Church resident minister, **Rev. Naoya Okano**, was recently notified by his immigration attorneys that because his visa would soon expire, he was required to return to Japan to await the issuance of permanent U.S. resident status (Green Card), a process that may take until the end of this year or longer. Therefore, the Okano family – Rev. Naoya, his wife, **Yuko**, and their two small children – returned to Japan at the end of June.

Church officers, ministers and staff have developed plans to manage the services, programs and operations of both the L.A. and Sacramento churches as efficiently and effectively as possible. Beginning in July, **Rev. Kazuo Yamada** will provide ministerial support at the L.A. Church until mid-July, when **Rev. Hisakazu Taki** is scheduled to serve in Los Angeles through October. Further information will be communicated in the coming weeks. Thank you for your cooperation and support.



July “Never Forgotten” Memorial Services

“Never Forgotten” Memorial Services are held monthly to honor the memory of those who have passed away during that particular month.

The Sacramento Spiritual Center will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, July 7, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Yukie Ota, Charlie Zenzo Tagawa, Steve Morio Taketa, Keisuke Tateishi, Yukio Tateishi, Keiichi Takemura, Tsuma Kino, Kimiko Yomogida, Yukio Jim Ide, Kazue Ando Kotabe, Alan Yoneo Oshima and Mother Kenyu Kiyota.**

The L.A. Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, July 14, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Mitsuru Amabe, Hideko Arakawa, Iku Arakawa, Masao Arakawa, Chester Bennington, Nathan Capross, Kazuma Fukunaga, Kathryn Christina Howe, Tomoko Imai, Kazuo Inouye, Yoshino Kawamura, Shige Kumashiro, Maria Antonia Lechuga, Ellen Hatsuko Mori, Hiroko Murakami, Stanley Muronaka, Tazu Nagura, Tomoyoshi Naito, Kyoko Nakaguchi, Shigeko Nakamura, Shigeko Nakamura, Helen Nakano, Eddie Kinya Ogura, Nancy Yoshie Ogura, Setsu Sakuma, Malayka Jane Sexton, Thomas Gray Sexton, Yukio Shimada, Grace Akemi Shimahara, Jack Shimatsu, Michiye Shimohira, Nobuyoshi Shimohira, Yoshinori Takamine, Genpachi Tanji, Riichi Tomita and Kazuma Toyama.**



2019 Graduates to Be Honored

Do you have a student in the family who will be receiving a diploma this year from elementary school, middle school, high school, college or graduate school? Under the sponsorships of the Los Angeles and Sacramento Sunday Schools, all graduates and their parents will be honored in July:

- Sacramento Spiritual Center: Sunday, July 14
- Los Angeles Church: Sunday, July 21

Please complete the application form, which is available at your branch office and return it by July 1.

Saito Goma Plaque Applications

Apply now for plaques for the *Saito Goma* ceremony at the Fall Festival on September 1. An application form is inserted in this newsletter and is available at your church branch. Deadline for applications is August 19. The application form and plaques have been updated. Read story on page 5.

2019 Memorial Tower Enshrinement

Applications for enshrinement in the Gedatsu Memorial Tower at this year’s Fall Grand Festival in Sacramento will be accepted until June 17. Fee is \$300 per application. Application forms are available at your church office.



Overnight Reno Trip: August 3-4

As part of their celebration of our 70th Anniversary, Sacramento members have planned a weekend bus trip to Reno – destination, Eldorado Hotel and Casino – for members, friends and Bazaar volunteer-helpers.

The bus will leave the Sacramento Spiritual Center on Saturday morning, August 3, at 8 a.m. The bus returns on Sunday, leaving the hotel at 2 p.m. and returning to Sacramento by 5 p.m. Bus fare is free. Cost per hotel room (not individual) is \$50 for retirees and \$135 for all others. (Taxes and fees are included.) Each person receives \$10 coupon to gamble and \$5 food credit. If you’re interested, please RSVP by July 18 to **Dave Ide** at (916) 712-7097 or bassnfull@yahoo.com.



70th Anniversary Celebrations

RVSPs Requested

Celebration Banquet: Saturday, August 31

Crowne Plaza Hotel in Northeast Sacramento
Reception at 5 pm. Banquet at 6 pm

Grand Fall Festival: Sunday, September 1

Goreichi, Sacramento Spiritual Center, 9:30 am

Have you RSVP'd?

Formal invitations to the celebration events were mailed and/or distributed to all members, with RSVPs requested. If you haven't yet responded (either yes or no), please advise the L.A. Church as soon as possible for planning purposes. (Phone: 626-288-1212 Email: la_branch@gedatsu-usa.org)

Have you made your room reservations?

Special room rates are available at the Crowne Plaza Hotel (\$95, plus tax, for a queen/king room and complimentary breakfast).

Call the hotel at (877) 504-0054 or email reservations@cpsac.com and ask for the "Gedatsu Church rate."

There will be no charge for the banquet buffet and Festival luncheon, thanks to the generosity of **Sr. Deacon Jackson Ito**.

Are you traveling by bus?

Free round-trip bus transportation between L.A. and Sacramento is available. The bus will leave the L.A. Church on Saturday morning, August 31, at 7 a.m. arriving at the Crown Plaza Hotel in time for the banquet.

Do you have questions?

Contact your branch church for further details.
L.A. Church: **Rev. Naoya Okano** (626) 288-1212.
naoya_okano@gedatsu-usa.org.
Sacramento Spiritual Center: **Rev. Kazuo Yamada**
(916) 363-6054. yamadagedatsula@gmail.com.



Former Abbot Okano Honored, Remembered in Moving Memorial Service

A simple, solemn memorial service for the late former **Abbot Seiho Okano** was held on May 19 in Gedatsu facilities at *Goreichi*, Japan. Approximately 1,700 members and guests were in attendance, including many leaders of other religious organizations.

Representing Gedatsu Church USA were **Sr. Rev. Akira Sebe, Sr. Deacon Jackson Ito, Deacon June Tanaka, Dave Ide, Mica Rodriguez** and **Cindy Tsujimura**. The backdrop for the service was a breathtaking floral display (shown above), composed of orchids, chrysanthemums and carnations.

Following the memorial address by **Chairman Teruo Okano**, speeches were given by **Chief President Uyemura** of Sennyuji Buddhist Temple, **Chief Priest Nakata** of Daigoji Buddhist Temple and **President Niwano** of Rissho Kosei Kai Buddhist Church. A memorial message from Gedatsu Church USA Chairman **Joyce Reid** was read. The service concluded with each attendee offering a carnation at the altar.



To accommodate the large number of attendees, the memorial service for former Abbot Okano was held in the **Gedatsu Renshinkan Kendo Dojo** facility on the grounds of the *Goreichi*.



Members Participate in Variety of Activities

In recent weeks, members participated in and observed a variety of festivals, holidays and other church activities that strengthened both their faith and fellowship. The images on this page illustrate those activities, which included Mother's Day and Memorial Day holidays, the annual plaque-burning service in Sacramento, L.A. Sunday School playdate and the Spring Festival in Japan.

At left, U.S. members attended the *Gedatsu-kai* Japan Spring Grand Festival in May at *Goreichi*. From left: Sr. Deacon Jackson Ito, Micaela Rodriguez, Deacon June Tanaka, Dave Ide and Sr. Rev. Akira Sebe.



Above left, the Sacramento Sunday School honored moms on Mother's Day. From left: Sadaye Tanaka, Nancy Horner, Sally McSwain, Judy Tsuboi, Harriet Sekikawa, Ritsuko Nakatani, Reiko Ide and Allison Horner. Above right, Dave Ide, representing Gedatsu Church, served the floral offering at the Inter-religious Memorial Day Service, a community multi-faith service.



Plaque-burning services were held at the Sacramento Spiritual Center *Goreichi* in May before the *Fudo-myo-O* statue. Old holy plaques, amulets and other lucky charms were respectfully cremated, as members offered prayers, enabling the purified essence of the holy items to return to where they originated.



The L.A. Sunday School sponsored an outing to a family recreation center for a fun day of miniature golf, arcade games, rides and snacks. At far left, the day was enjoyed by Hiro Ishida, 6 (who has near-perfect attendance in the Sunday program!); instructor, Marylin Nakamura; and Hiro's grandparents, Marie and Mark Ishida (not shown). "We see the positive impact that Marylin and the Sunday program have on Hiro," says Marie. "We had the best time at the outing and hope that more Sunday School kids can join us next time."

At left, Naomi Takara elated the L.A. Church congregation with her joyful, uplifting musical performance, singing in English, Japanese and Hawaiian, while playing her ukulele.



Digital Displays Enhance Church Experience

Recently installed large-screen displays and digital technology in both the Los Angeles and Sacramento churches are being enthusiastically praised for adding visual interest to ministers' sermons and other programs, such as the "Never Forgotten" services, holiday programs, memorial services and member presentations.

"Our LED display monitor helps the audience better understand our messages," says **Rev. Naoya Okano** of the L.A. Church. "Verbal messages alone can be boring. A colorful chart, image or video gives our communications visual impact. And young people are particularly receptive to visual communications. As they say, 'A picture is worth a thousand words.'"

In Sacramento, **Rev. Kazuo Yamada** agrees. "When I use PowerPoint images to illustrate my sermons, members show much more interest than simply listening. Images make a stronger impression and help them retain the content of the sermon better and longer. In order to spread Gedatsu, we need to employ teaching materials and methods that make full use of visual images, such as YouTube videos and video blogs. I hope to continue improving my digital skills to enhance my communications."



Updated *Saito Goma* Plaques Reflect Concerns, Needs of Today's Members

After six decades, our *Saito Goma* fire ceremony plaques are being updated to reflect the concerns and needs of today's members.

Plaques that addressed the agriculture-related concerns of the many farming members in the '50s and '60s – such as "to eliminate farm insects,"

"blessing for plants" and "release from climactic mishaps" – have been replaced with new categories like "family prosperity," "appreciation to country" and "maintain mental health." Interestingly, the most-requested plaque categories remain unchanged: traffic safety, good health and longevity, ancestor blessing, family protection and protection again fire and theft.

"We've realized for quite a while that our plaques were outdated and needed to be changed," explains **Rev. Naoya Okano**. "Our 70th Anniversary year incentivized us to update the application form and plaques."

The new plaques will be used at the Fall Festival. Please use the new application form, which is inserted in this newsletter and available at church branches. Guest members attending the Festival from *Gedatsu-kai* Japan are also being offered the opportunity to apply for *Saito Goma* plaques – a new experience for them.

DEAR REVEREND

Q

Is it wrong for me to ask God to restore my health?

A

Let me get straight to the point: No, it is NOT wrong to ask God to restore your health.

During our lives, we all experience illness. Sometimes, even though we take medications or receive medical treatment, we don't get well. Or someone we love might be suffering from illness. When we see cases like these, it is natural to ask God to restore us or our loved ones to health.

However, when we request God to restore our health, please remember three important things:

First, never forget that you are allowed to live by the grace of God and your ancestors, who are constantly watching over you. Rather than being unhappy by dwelling on your illness, focus instead on the blessings and love you are receiving from God. Those positive thoughts energize your body to overcome your illness.

Second, make every effort to improve your health. In other words, try your best to fix the cause of your illness. If you overindulge on food or alcohol, eat and drink more moderately, consume healthy foods and exercise regularly. I believe God aids those who earnestly try their best to improve their situation or condition.

Lastly, express your gratitude to God and work for the benefit of society and others.

“By saying ‘thank you,’ you are properly expressing appreciation to God.”

When you ask someone to do something, and your request is answered, by saying “thank you” to that person, you are properly expressing appreciation to God.

Also, when you get sick, you come to realize that you are allowed to live thanks to all the support of many people, such as your doctor, your spouse, co-workers and others. Once your health returns, it is your turn to be the supporter. Work harder to benefit society, help others who are suffering from illness, and give hope to people around you.

When we pray to God to restore our health, we should keep these important points in mind. When we do so – and return the favor to society – our prayers are not selfish.

I sincerely pray for your good health.

Rev. Naoya Okano

OUR GEDATSU STUDY

New Series on Gedatsu Kongo's Teachings

*Beginning this month, the Gedatsu Companion is pleased to bring readers a 12-part series on the teachings of Gedatsu Kongo, written by **Rev. Hisakazu Taki** and published for the first time in English. While the series is a greatly condensed version of Rev. Taki's original work, we can benefit through his careful selection of the key elements of the Master's teaching.*

“Welcome to Gedatsu” is a product of Rev. Taki's life-long study of Gedatsu and is for both new and longtime followers of the Gedatsu faith. We hope that by reading this series, your understanding of the teaching will be strengthened and reaffirmed.

Editors

Foreword to “Welcome to Gedatsu”

“Welcome to Gedatsu” was originally serialized in *Gedatsu Magazine* of *Gedatsu-kai* Japan from January 2004 through December 2007 and was later published as three separate books (shown on page 7). My primary purpose in writing this series was to illustrate the full scope of Master Gedatsu Kongo's teaching.

Through my own 40-year study and practice of Gedatsu, I now strongly believe that Gedatsu Kongo's teaching is very simple and clear.

Because Gedatsu Kongo was born in Japan and raised as a Japanese citizen, his teaching was mainly addressed to Japanese people at that time. However, the essence of his teaching is universal. It is for everyone's happiness and world peace.

I tried to capture the entire picture of the Gedatsu teaching by quoting Gedatsu Kongo's own words. After the books were published, many readers said they were able to grasp the big picture of Gedatsu Kongo's teaching through reading this book.

For you American readers, I translated the original version to be as comprehensible as possible. I believe you will be able to understand both the essence and the entirety of Master Gedatsu Kongo's teaching through reading this series. I hope this series will help you understand Gedatsu and live a good and meaningful life.

Rev. Hisakazu Taki



“Welcome to Gedatsu”

By Rev. Hisakazu Taki

Chapter 1:

Gedatsu, a Non-Sectarian Religious Study

The September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 gave a shock throughout the world. When we saw the burning Twin Towers collapsing one after the other on the TV screen, we were gravely shaken. At that moment, the world changed, or rather, the reality of the human mind was clearly exposed.

What has become more and more obvious since then is, in a word, the loss of our sense of trust. But, when we lose our mutual trust, what will be left in the world? How can we lead a peaceful life in a world of mutual distrust and suspicion?

There have been various religions in the world since ancient times. When we observe their doctrines, rituals, and objects of worship, many of them seem to be mutually exclusive. However, although there are various differences, almost all religions agree in their objectives: people's happiness and world peace.

It is curious that all religions agree in this respect, although they did not collaborate. This fact shows that there is a common ground all people share despite their differences. We all long for peace and happiness regardless of race, culture or tradition. We can find hope for our future in this point.

But actually, by observing world history, we can see that there have been countless wars and tragic bloodbaths because of religion in all ages and places. We should humbly think about why those tragedies have happened repeatedly. We should not look at this question as bystanders. We should question our own minds, which is the key to realizing world peace.

We are all allowed to exist by receiving immeasurable blessings from everything in the universe. When we become aware of this, we inevitably will be thankful for everyone and everything, and will be able to respect others. We will then, as a token of appreciation, work together for our common goal: world peace.

Gedatsu is the path toward our mutual understanding and respect, and the path for everyone's happiness.

Gedatsu Kongo, founder of Gedatsu Church, focused on the Japanese traditional religious faith as a good example to follow in order to promote mutual understanding and world peace.

Until quite recently, Japanese people used to listen to the following words of their grandparents:

“Heaven sees into our hearts!”

“If you tell a lie, Enma, the king of Hell, will pull out your tongue!”

“If you waste a grain of rice, you'll lose your sight!”

“How can I apologize to ancestors for what you did?”

Modern people may have lost touch with the spiritual heart of their ancestors. Japanese people have revered Nature as a divine being and respected ancestors as our root from ancient times. They have respected their ancestors' religious faiths and tried to live sincerely according to the will of God and ancestors.

(Continued on page 8)

(Welcome – Continued from page 7)

Founder Gedatsu Kongo found a basis for people's peaceful coexistence in this Japanese traditional religious faith. He tried to revive this Japanese spirit in modern society. This is the path of Gedatsu.

Gedatsu Kongo stated:

"If you only believe that Buddhism came to Japan from India through China, you have the wrong idea about Buddhism. Historically speaking, the Buddha originated the teaching of Buddhism in India, and it was brought to Japan through China. However, the teaching the Buddha preached was the Universal Truth, which has been available throughout the universe since time immemorial. Even if the Buddha were not born in India, the Universal Truth itself that Buddhism explains has been always available before us. Buddhist scriptures came to Japan about 1,500 years ago. Until then, there was no Buddhist literature in Japan. However, all people living on earth have been always allowed to exist by this Universal Truth, no matter if they believed it or not. Therefore, I say that the teaching of Buddhism has been always existing since ancient times."

This is an important understanding of Buddhism. Historically, Buddhism came to Japan from India through China 1,500 years ago. But the Universal Truth itself has been always available before us since time immemorial.

As compared with monotheism, such as Christianity and Islam, Japanese people's religious faith may look ambiguous. Most people in Japan go to both Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples to pay respect. But we should be aware that Japanese people have unique spirituality, which is quite different from Western people. Japanese people have believed from ancient times that everything on earth is an expression of the Divine Spirit and that everything is connected with each

other as One Life. This receptiveness is the basis of Japanese people's religious faith, which may be a key to solving serious problems the modern world is facing now, such as global warming, desertification, famine, refugee issue, etc.

Gedatsu is a non-sectarian religious study based on Japanese traditional religious faith.

Gedatsu Kongo stated:

"Gedatsu has no national boundary. Gedatsu goes beyond creed and is equally accessible to all people regardless of race or nationality."

"The path of God is but one. The universe is unified by one law."

Our founder called this boundless world of life "Gedatsu." It is not hard to see this infinite world. Just look up at the sky. You'll see it is boundless. The Universe is a boundless world of life.

There have been various religions in the world. Many of them may look exclusive and intolerant. However, when you look into them more closely, you'll find that they all share a common ground: the boundless world of Life. When we become aware of this common ground, we will be able to overcome conflicts among religions, respect each other and cooperate for world peace.

Gedatsu respects all religions. Therefore, you need not convert your faith when you join Gedatsu. Rather, you should be thankful for the religion believed by you and your ancestors and live your religion in your everyday life.

To respect God and ancestors, live each day with appreciation and gratitude, and contribute to people's happiness and world peace through your daily duties – this is the path of Gedatsu, a non-sectarian religious study.

(Next issue: The Universal Life Force)



MAY 2019 OFFERINGS

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$5–\$49: M/M R. Nakatani, S. Tanaka, M/M B. Ide,
M/M T. Yui, S. Taketa, S. Nishino, M/M D. Ide

\$100+: M/M D. Tsuboi, J. Sebe / J. Detwiler

\$200+: M/M J. Horner

Special Acknowledgment

M/M D. Tsuboi In memory of Ben Ide (\$100)

(Due to administrative reasons, the above listing is incomplete.
Additional May offerings will be listed in next month's newsletter.)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

\$5–\$49: P. Chen, M/M M. Hamada, K. Kuritani, R. Levy,
H. Nakamura, M. Nakamura, T. Nakamura, A. Okimura,
N. Takara, Y. Liu / M. Zhou

\$50–\$99: M/M K. Chinen, M/M T. Fukushima, J. Kaku,
M/M J. Matsushita, M/M/ V. Mizokami, Y. Murakami,
Y. Oishi, R. Shimatsu, E. Teng, T. Toyama, M/M H. Tsujimura,
M/M R. Tsujimura

\$100+: M/M R. Allum, K. Fujii, M/M B. Hamamoto, L. Ito, S.
Kaku, M/M K. Kuritani, M/M/ M. Murakami, P. Nakamura,
M. Okada, M/M N. Okano, L. Sanchez

\$200+: M/M F. Barthel, T. Ishida, M/M T. Matsumoto, D.
Shiroishi

\$400+: J. Ito, S. Okimura, T. Okimura

\$600+: Gedatsu Kendo Dojo

Special Acknowledgment

Gregory/Emily Pressman In memory of Tomiko Mizokami (\$100)

M/M R. Tsujimura In memory of Tomiko Mizokami (\$100)

Catherina K. Harada In memory of Tomiko Mizokami (\$200)

M/M H. Tsujimura In memory of Tomiko Mizokami (\$100)

M/M K. Kuritani In memory of Tomiko Mizokami (\$100)

M/M H. Tsujimura In memory of Tozo Tsujimura, Hiroshi
Yamamisaka (\$200)

Frank Miyamura In memory of Kikuyo Miyamura (\$150)

M/M S. Shiroishi "Never Forgotten" for Shizuyo Nakamura
and Phillip Nakamura (\$100)

M/M S. Shiroishi "Never Forgotten" for Hidekichi and
Tsunami Shiroishi (\$100)

M/M N. Okano Nanami's 1st birthday (\$100)

C/G Garcia House and property blessing (\$135)

Goreichi Care Fund

(The Fund is established to pay for repairs, upgrades and ongoing
maintenance of structures and property of the *Goreichi* Holy
Grounds of the Sacramento Spiritual Center.)

M/M Norio Kishida (\$1,000)

(*Gedatsu-kai* Japan, Ookayama Branch)

2019 / 2020 UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 31 (Sat) 70th Anniversary Banquet (Sacramento)

Sep 1 (Sun) 70th Anniversary Fall Grand Festival 9:30 am

Sep 3 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)

Sep 15 (Sun) L.A. *Higan* Service

Sep 22 (Sun) Sacramento *Higan* Service

Sep 29 (Sun) Church Closed

Oct 5-6 (Sat-Sun) L.A. Autumn Moon Festival

Oct 15 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Columbus Day)

Oct 20 (Sun) L.A. *Ujigami* Service

Oct 27 (Sun) Sacramento All Souls Service

Nov 3 (Sun) L.A. Gedatsu Kongo's Service

Nov 10 (Sun) Sac'to Gedatsu Kongo Memorial Service

Nov 17 (Sun) L.A. 7-5-3-Year Children's Celebration

Nov 24 (Sun) Sac'to 7-5-3-Year Children's Celebration /
Gedatsu Kongo Birthday

Nov 28-29 Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Dec 1 (Sun) L.A. Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service

Dec 7 (Sat) L.A. Church Clean-up

Dec 8 (Sun) Sac'to Last Service of Year /
Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service

Dec 15 (Sun) L.A. Last Service / Christmas Program

Dec 22-31 Church Closed

2020 (Events / dates subject to change)

Jan 1 (Wed) New Year Homage

Jan 2-3 (Thu-Fri) Church Closed

Jan 12 (Sun) Sacramento New Year Service

Jan 19 (Sun) L.A. New Year Service

Jan 21 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Martin Luther
King Jr. Day)

Feb 16 (Sun) L.A. Sun Spirit Service

Feb 18 (Tue) Church Closed (in lieu of Presidents' Day)

Mar 13 (Fri) Propagation Meeting 10 am

Mar 14 (Sat) Board of Directors Meeting 10 am

Mar 15 (Sun) L.A. *Higan* Service (Japanese & English)

Mar 22 (Sun) Sacramento *Higan* Service

Mar 29 (Sun) Church Closed

7 月度 教会行事予定

ロサンゼルス教会

- 4 (水) 教会休み (建国記念日)
- 7 (日) 10:00A 日本語感謝会
- 14 (日) 10:00A 祥月追善法要
- 21 (日) 10:00A 日英感謝会・お盆法要
卒業生のお祝い
- 25-28 (木)-(日) ユース・キャンプ(サクラメント)
- 28 (日) 10:00A 英語感謝会・阿字観法
リージョナル委員会

サクラメント教会

- 4 (木) 教会休み (建国記念日)
- 7 (日) 10:00A 祥月追善法要
- 14 (日) 9:30A 感謝会・卒業生のお祝い
お盆法要/リージョナル委員会
- 21 (日) 1:00P サンノゼ支部感謝会
- 25-28 (木)-(日) ユース・サマー・キャンプ



7 月度 みさとし

「一つの言葉でもまごころから出たら
百の空念仏に数等まさる」

われわれは日常的に言葉を使って他人とコミュニケーションをはかっているが、言葉がもつ力というもの、ふだんあまり意識していないのではないだろうか。人間が発する言葉は目には見えないが、言葉一つで人を絶望に陥れ自殺に追い込むこともできれば、失意のどん底にある人に生きる希望と力を与えることもできるのである。このような言葉が持つ力を深く自覚するならば、われわれはふだんの生活のなかで出会う相手一人ひとりに対して、思いやりのこもった言葉を発することができるようになるだろう。思いやりのこもった温かい一言が、相手を動かすのである。相手に希望とよろこびを与えるのも、絶望と落胆を与えるのも、われわれの言葉であることを忘れてはならない。

誌 上 講 話

お焚き上げとエネルギーの不滅について

サクラメント・山田一雄

本年の「古札・浄災の儀」は、サクラメント・スピリチュアル・センターの護摩壇において5月26日(日)に行われました。

この行事は、日本では「お焚き上げ」と一般に呼ばれ、神社やお寺で古くから行なわれてきた大切な儀式の一つです。通常人々は、年末から年始にかけて、古くなった神札やお守り札などを神社やお寺に納めてお焚き上げをしてもらいます。それらのお札は、浄火にてお焚き上げされ、そのお札に込められていた霊的実体やエネルギーは天地に帰還されるのです。

解脱教会でも、ほぼ同じ方式で「浄災の儀」が行われます。当教会では、新しい神札や供養札を受け取ったら、古いお札を不敬にならぬよう下記のような指導(*注)します。

まず、「一年間、お守り頂きましてありがとうございました」とお礼の言葉を述べ、「神々さま、おみたまさま、どうぞ古いお札から新しいお札へお移りください。古いお札はお焚き上げさせていただきます」と声を掛けます。そして、古いお札をお焚き上げ用にと、感謝金を添えて、教会に納めます。

そのような礼節を示すことが大切です。おみたまは目には見えなくても、常に私たちの祈りを受けて働いておられるからです。

ですから、もし神聖なお札類を用が済んだからといってゴミのように捨ててしまったら、それは神霊に対し冒瀆するのと変わらない行為です。おみたまを粗末に扱ってはならないのは、無縁霊に対しても同じです。どんな霊に対しても決して侮らず、礼節をもって接するべきなのです。「霊は礼をもって鎮まる」と金剛さまは教えられました。「尊いものを尊く扱う」基本の礼節を大切にしていきたいと思います。

ところで、古札には感謝の祈りをささげたのに、なぜその上にお焚き上げの儀式をする必要があるのでしょうか。



そもそも神札やお守り札や供養札などは、神聖な祈りのエネルギーが込められて作られています。またそれらのお札は、祭壇に祀られ、多くの祈りのエネルギーを受けてきました。それらのエネルギーの波動が古札に込められている以上、それらのエネルギーに呼応する霊的エネルギーはまだつながっているのです。だからこそ、それらの霊的なエネルギーを祈りと共に聖なる炎で浄化し、元の居場所に戻っていただくのです。

皆さんは「エネルギー保存の法則」あるいは「エネルギー不滅の法則」ということを、学校の物理の時間に習ったことがあると思います。簡単に言えば、エネルギーは永遠に不滅であり、すべてのエネルギーは、消滅させることはできないのです。できるのは、その形を変えることだけなのです。

たとえば、私たちの命のエネルギーも永遠に不滅で、消滅することはありません。肉体が朽ちても、命のエネルギーは霊的な存在へと形を変えて生き続けます。火葬された後の肉体のエネルギーもまた、塵や水分などに形を変えて存在していきます。金剛さまも、「生命ある実体は死滅するが、霊魂は不滅で、唯その流転変化だけが認められる。厳密に言えば物質も消滅してしまうのではなく、事実は流転変化するのである」と言われています。そのように、エネルギー自体は、違う種類のエネルギーに変化することはあっても決して消滅はしないのです。

それは感情のエネルギーも同じです。ですから、怒りなどのネガティブな感情を抑えつけていても、そのエネルギーは永遠に保存され、いつか暴発するかもしれません。ネガティブな因縁についても同じことが言えます。

金剛さまは、「大祖元以来の祖々の肉体的精神的伝統の誤りが現存する事を知られたならば、一日も捨て置かず、今すぐにも打破して、正しい家庭の伝道に進みたいのであります」と述べておられます。

ネガティブな因縁のスパイラルをプラスのエネルギーに変えるためには、ネガティブな因縁のマイナスを打ち消すほどプラスを生むような新たな因縁を創り出していく必要があります。それが解脱における勉強なのです。解脱では、マイナスのスパイラルから私たちを引き上げる多くの実用的な手法があります。

たとえば、お浄めや瞑想は、乱れた波動をニュートラルな波動へと調整し、天茶の供養は、霊的エネルギーの影響を浄化します。お詫びの行もその一つです。間違っていた気持ちに気づいたら、その間違いを神にお詫びし、気持ちを切り替えることが、マイナスをプラスのエネルギーにシフトする方法なのです。また、毎日の祈り、宇宙の大生命力や守護神・守護霊から絶えず受けている恵みや加護や導きを認識することは、思考と行動の前向きな基盤を作ります。常に物事の見方をポジティブにシフトさせ、プラスのエネルギーを発揮しつつ、自己成長を目指していきましょう。

*注：（本会には祭祀を終える際や古札の霊魂を送る際に使用する2種のお札があります。現在米国教会では浄炎の儀に際し一括して「霊魂送り券」を用いていますが、より丁寧に送霊する場合はそのお札を教会にお求めください）

掲 示 板

● 70 周年秋季大祭を期に、柴燈護摩の祈祷内容の一部が変更されました。

柴燈護摩の祈祷申込み項目には時代の推移に伴い申し込みが少ない項目が増えました。そこで時代の要請に合わせて一部の項目に変更を加えました。今秋季大祭での柴燈護摩の申し込みには、新しくなった申込書をお使いください。締め切りは8月18日（日）です。

● 創立 70 周年記念祝賀・晩餐会について

米国教会 70 周年の祝賀晩餐会は、サクラメント「クラウン・プラザ・ホテル」にて8月31日（土）午後5時に受付け、6時に開始されます。

● LA 教会からサクラメントのホテルでの晩餐会に向けて無料バスが出ます

バスは8月31日土曜日の朝に出発します。バス代・晩餐会は、ジャクソン伊藤さんの奉納により無料です。LA 教会までお申込みください。

● サクラメント教会 70 周年記念・リノ 1 泊バス・ツアーは8月3（土）4（日）に行われます。

バスは午前8時に出発し翌日午後5時に戻る予定です。詳細は Dave Ide または教会まで。



The *Gedatsu Companion* is published monthly for members like **Chris McSwain** of Sacramento. He and **Sally McSwain** are the parents of **Everett** (18) and **Vivian** (13), and their entire family is actively involved in many areas of their church and community. An active Boy Scout leader

and former Sacramento church president, Chris serves as finance chief for the State's wildfire cleanup in Butte County. Raised in the Catholic church, where his father is an ordained deacon, Chris learned the value of service from his parents. Both he and Sally feel it is important to pass on the tradition of service to their children.

Rev. Kazuo Yamada, Editor

Joyce Reid, Editor-in-Chief

Kiyoko Hirayama, Arlene Okimura, Yoko Yamada,
Photographers

Editorial contributors to this issue:

Dave Ide, Chris McSwain, Rev. Naoya Okano, Deacon Jo Ann Shiroishi, Rev. Hisakazu Taki, Calvin Tanaka, Cindy Tsujimura

Gedatsu Church USA
Los Angeles Branch
7850 Hill Drive
Rosemead, CA 91770

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EL MONTE, CA
PERMIT NO. 110



A Snapshot in Time

This photo was taken some time in our church's 70-year history.

Can you identify the date, activity and people in the photo?

If you can identify any of the details relating to this photo, email your answer(s) to la_branch@gedatsu-usa.org.

