

# GEDATSU COMPANION

GEDATSU CHURCH USA  
www.gedatsu-usa.org

## JANUARY 2020

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### Gedatsu Kongo's Thought for the Month

*"Love and compassion  
are the roots of good deeds."*

Master Gedatsu Kongo stated, "Your thoughts will be expressed as your words, and eventually, as your behavior."

In other words, you cannot hide your thoughts. They will be revealed in your behavior and, ultimately, become your personality.

Develop feelings of empathy within yourself and show your thoughtfulness to others. By doing so, you will become a genuinely compassionate person.

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Wed	1	9:00 am	New Year Homage (until noon)
Thu-Fri	2-3		Church Closed
Sun	5	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	12	9:30 am	First Service of the Year Potluck Party & Gift Exchange
Tue	14	11:00 am	Asian Care Center Buddhist Service
Sun	19	1:00 pm	San Jose Branch <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Tue	21		Church Closed (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
Sun	26	9:30 am	Appreciation Service / Regional Board Meeting

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Tue	1	7:30 am	New Year Homage (until noon)
Thu-Fri	2-3		Church Closed
Sun	5	10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	12	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	19	10:00 am	New Year Appreciation Service (Japanese/English) Coming of Age Ceremony / Potluck & Gift Raffle
Tue	21		Church Closed (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
Sun	26	10:00 am	English Appreciation Service / "Brunch with Youth" / L.A. Regional Board Meeting

## FEBRUARY 2020

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	2	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	9	9:30 am	Appreciation Service
Sun	16	1:00 pm	San Jose Branch <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Tue	18		Church Closed (In lieu of Presidents Day)
Sun	23	9:30 am	Appreciation Service / Regional Board Meeting

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	2	10:00 am	Japanese <i>Kanshakai</i> Service
Sun	9	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	16	10:00 am	Appreciation Service (Japanese & English) Sun Spirit Service
Tue	18		Church Closed (In lieu of Presidents Day)
Sun	23	10:00 am	English Appreciation Service / "Brunch with Youth" / L.A. Regional Board Mtg.



### January “Never Forgotten” Memorial Services

“Never Forgotten” Memorial Services are held monthly at the Gedatsu Church to honor the memory of those who have passed away during that particular month. People of all faiths are welcome, so invite your friends and family members to attend. Even if you are unable to attend, you may still honor the soul of a loved one.

The Sacramento Spiritual Center will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, January 5, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Machi Takagi, Teru Nakayama, Tsuneko Sekikawa, Genkichi Sekikawa, Fudeyo Sekikawa, Yoshiko Sekikawa, Rose Yamamoto, Bernard Sakamoto, Natsuko Furukawa, Teiichiro Noritake, Taro Takemura, Hatsuko Mishima, Jane Kaoru Ide, Richard Aadland and Kenneth Kenichiro Yasuda.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, January 12, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **David H. Dyson III, Aileen T. Hirayama, Elaine Rose Kaproff, Takako Karplus, Walter Karplus, Yoshihiko Kitagawa, Chu Ly, Tadashi Thomas Matsumoto, Kazuko Matsuura, Kiyoko Michiuye, Konami Miyakawa, Asaye Mizuki, Hisano Nakamura, Mohei Nakamura, Hiroko Notoya, Chika Okimura, Motoichi Okimura, Leah O’Leary, Chiyoko Sato, Grace Yuko Sato, Moto Tanji, Saburo Tanji, Dennis Koichi Toguchi, Nobuko Tsujimura, Sumiko Tsujimura, Kenneth Kenichiro Yasuda and Frank Young.**

### Renew Your Holy Paper Plaques

The new year is the time to renew your holy paper plaques for placement around your home for protection and blessing. See your local church branch for details on types of plaques and prices.

### Obituary

The Sacramento Spiritual Center mourns the loss of member **Henry Calderón**, who passed away unexpectedly in November at the age of 30. Henry is survived by his parents, **Roger and Gloria Calderón**; his sister, **Sabrina Calderón**; his daughter, **Mariana Calderón Liddell** and his partner **Micaela Rodriguez.**

### Renew Your Church Membership for 2020

Gedatsu Church USA is supported through pledges, donations and membership dues. Please renew your annual membership dues now.

Individual Fee	Annual: \$45	Lifetime: \$450
Family Fee	Annual: \$70	Lifetime: \$600
Additional Women’s Club Fee	\$6	

Mail or deliver your check – made payable to Gedatsu Church USA – to your nearest church branch.



### Meet Mica Rodriguez – New Minister-in-Training

The Board of Directors of Gedatsu Church USA is pleased to announce the appointment of Sacramento member, **Micaela (Mica) Rodriguez,**

as our new minister-in-training, effective January 2020. Mica will be based at the Sacramento Spiritual Center, reporting to **Rev. Kazuo Yamada.**

Mica’s new position has been structured as a dual role. She will serve half her time in an office staff capacity, which includes ministerial support, clerical/office duties and facility maintenance. The other half of her time will be devoted to performing ministerial duties.

Mica will go through a minister-training course, composed of a six-to-12-month program under the supervision of U.S. ministers (including doctrinal study and basic instruction in Gedatsu practices, services, prayer, etiquette, etc.) and the completion of training at *Goreichi Gedatsu-kai* Japan. Ordination as minister is upon approval by **Bishop Teruo Okano** and ministers.

Mica, 31, a seventh-generation Mexican American, is mother to her son **Pop**, 14, and daughter, **Ami**, 10. She has been working in the optometry field for the past eight years.

Members are urged to thank and support Mica for her service to the church, and to welcome her in her new role.





The Sacramento Spiritual Center honored 5-year-old Tobias Akira Heinzl (at left, with parents, Delphine Sebe and Thomas Heinzl) and 7-year-old Gwynevere Ralenna Hsueh Ramey (at right, with mother, Allison Horner).

### Families Celebrate, Give Thanks for Their Children in 7-5-3 Ceremonies

In November, church members, family and friends observed the 7-5-3 Festival, or *Shichi-Go-San*, the traditional Japanese celebration for the well-being and healthy futures of children. Parents of children ages seven, five and three years gave thanks at the *Ujigami* shrine and altar for the divine protection and guidance their children receive.

Also following the Japanese tradition, the children were given *chitose-ame* candy – *chitose* literally meaning a thousand years. The candy and ornamental bag (photo below) are both expressions of the parents' wish that their children live long and prosperous lives.



At the L.A. Church, 11 children were honored: (front row, left to right) Katsuki Masuda (3), Tanyr Perez (5), Tyler Arciniega (3), Ethan Mizokami (7), Maya Yamashiro (7), Miya Lee (5) and Hunter Chodor (3). (Back row, left to right) Jacob Tsang (7), Brevyn Choy (7), Evan Arciniega (7) and Aurora Chodor (5).



At L.A. Church, member and guest families celebrating the 7-5-3 Festival greeted the congregation and posed before the altar.

### Fulfilling Our Vision to Be a Welcoming, Accessible Church for Everyone

Over the past several years, driven by our church's propagation goals, our Los Angeles and Sacramento churches began implementing a number of changes to make our Gedatsu teaching and practices more accessible and less confusing to people of all faiths and cultures, especially newcomers, as well as young families and youth. These changes included:

- Creating a monthly "Never Forgotten" memorial service to honor the memory of loved ones who have passed
- Calling our English Sunday service "Appreciation Service," instead of *Kanshakai*
- Eliminating religious rituals – such as flint striking, bowing and clapping
- Simplifying the prayer and prayer service to make it easier to understand, less confusing
- Keeping sermons short and light, focusing on life lessons in the form of relevant stories
- Using technology with sermons – such as digital monitors, videos and PowerPoint – to add interest and clarity (see photo, back page)

Encouraged by the success these measures have made in enhancing the church experience, the L.A. Regional Board implemented additional activities, including:

- Calling on members to relate "personal reflections" as part of the Sunday services
- Starting Sunday services with friendly "stand-and-greet" expressions (see photo, top right)
- Integrating musical performances, singing and fun activities into the services (see photo, bottom right)
- Acknowledging monthly birthdays among the congregation
- Encouraging fellowship through after-service sit-down lunches/refreshments (see photos, back page)

And the list keeps expanding as L.A. and Sacramento regional boards continually pursue new activities to energize members and attract newcomers.

For example, beginning this month, the L.A. Church will inaugurate two new activities. An annual "Coming of Age" celebration, based on the Japanese tradition, will be held to acknowledge the passage of 20-year-olds to adulthood. And a youth-focused program, "Brunch with Youth" will bring together teens and young adults for fun activities and discussion following the fourth Sunday service.

"In order to grow our church, we must always view our services, programs, activities and events from the perspective of newcomers," says **Joyce Reid**, Board chairman. "These changes and improvements are not only for current members, but, more importantly, for future generations of Gedatsu followers everywhere."

**Deacon Hisato Tsujimura** agrees. "All of our services and programs are for people of all faiths. As Gedatsu members, we must always remember this and continually relay this message to our friends and neighbors."

*(Continued on back page)*



At top, L.A. Church members "stand and greet" fellow churchgoers at the start of the Sunday service to encourage friendly exchange. At bottom, playing a rousing round of "rock, paper, scissors" adds to the welcoming atmosphere.



### **“Welcome to Gedatsu”**

**By Rev. Hisakazu Taki**

#### Chapter 7:

#### The Path of Gedatsu

### **The Three Sacred Monuments of the Goreichi Holy Grounds in Japan**

Just before his passing, **Master Gedatsu Kongo** told people around him the following:

*“The Three Sacred Monuments – All Souls Monument, Sun Spirit Monument and Monument of Encomium – which I established in Goreichi, represent the essence of the Gedatsu teaching. When you humbly and sincerely pray before these monuments, I will teach you whatever you need.”*

These monuments are made of stone. What did Gedatsu Kongo mean by saying that these monuments represent the essence of the Gedatsu teaching?

During his lifetime, Master Gedatsu Kongo did not build any splendid buildings. However, he put his whole heart and soul into establishing these three monuments. One day, someone asked him, “Why do you erect stone monuments only, *Sensei*? They get wet when it rains. Could you build shrines, please?” Gedatsu Kongo then said to him,

*“Stone is the bone of the universe. It lasts forever. Shrines will burn down eventually, no matter how splendid they are. But stone will last for thousands of years and will speak to us, if we sincerely listen.”*

Gedatsu Kongo believed that stone was the best material to represent the eternal truth of the universe.

### **All Souls Monument – Symbol of Goodness**

The All Souls Monument was erected on the *Goreichi* Holy Grounds at the Fall Festival in November of 1936. Master Gedatsu Kongo had desired to erect the monument for many years. He spoke about this monument as follows.

*“I erected this monument as the symbol of world peace. I am not saying, ‘All souls and spirits, may you rest in peace.’ Rather, I am asking all souls and spirits to be active and vigorously help humankind work for peace throughout the world.”*

*“Goreichi is the place where members come to improve their character. When you come here before the All Souls Monument, pay your respects to the spirits of all living things on earth and thank them for their immeasurable blessings.”*



Our daily existence is totally due to the immeasurable blessings we receive from all living things and everything on earth from ancient times. We should be aware of their blessings and live daily with appreciation and gratitude. This is why Gedatsu Kongo established the All Souls Monument in *Goreichi*.

Gedatsu Kongo built this monument as a symbol of Goodness, saying, “*Goodness will ultimately flourish.*” He called this monument “the symbol of world peace.”

The All Souls Monument is not a memorial tower to console the spirits of the dead. It is a monument to pay respect to all souls and spirits from ancient times and thank them for their blessings.

### **Sun Spirit Monument – Symbol of Truth**

Master Gedatsu Kongo established the Sun Spirit Monument in *Goreichi* on February 11, Japan’s National Foundation Day, in 1940. At the unveiling ceremony of the monument, he said:

*“I put my whole soul into establishing the Sun Spirit Monument here in Kitamoto, my dear hometown, as a token of appreciation and gratitude. I strongly believe*

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*that this monument will exist here as long as the earth exists. I will stay here as a soul after my physical death and protect this monument forever as a symbol of world peace.*

*“Never forget that our present existence is the fruit of ancestors’ blood, sweat and tears.”*

He erected the Sun-Spirit Monument as a symbol of Truth, saying, *“Truth will ultimately prevail.”* These words were spoken to encourage us to learn our ancestors’ true heart and live with sincere appreciation. We will then be able to get over any difficulties in life.

### **Monument of Encomium – Symbol of Beauty**

The unveiling ceremony of the Monument of Encomium was held in *Goreichi* on November 28, 1941, Gedatsu Kongo’s 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. All members donated this monument as an expression of their gratitude to Master Gedatsu Kongo. At the ceremony, he thanked members and said, *“Today I start another cycle of my life,”* declaring his resolve to cope with the turbulent times as a new person.



Gedatsu Kongo called the Monument of Encomium a symbol of *Beauty*, and said, *“Beauty will ultimately shine forth.”* It represents the beautiful heart of members to love and respect their teacher, Gedatsu Kongo. By saying these words, Gedatsu Kongo encouraged members to radiate the beauty of their uniqueness for the benefit of the world.

### **Spring and Fall Grand Festivals**

Master Gedatsu Kongo started the annual Grand Festival on May 8, 1931. Since then, we have held Grand Festivals twice a year in spring and autumn. We attend the festivals to express appreciation and gratitude for the blessings we receive from everything in the universe. At the festivals, Master Gedatsu Kongo always said:

*“I do not thank you for coming, because this is your Grand Festival for your happiness, not mine.”*

When we attend the festivals, we pay respect to the Three Sacred Monuments, sincerely thank God and all spirits for their immeasurable blessings and resolve to live each day with appreciation and gratitude for the benefit of the world.

### **Living Each Day with Appreciation and Gratitude**

The Gedatsu teaching is based on the Universal Law, which permeates throughout the world from ancient times. All living things, including humans, are allowed to live according to this Law. Therefore, when we live each day according to the Universal Law, we are able to live happily. The Three Sacred Monuments in *Goreichi* represent the Universal Law.

Gedatsu is a simple path for everyone’s happiness. We pay respect to God, ancestors, all people and living things on earth, and all spirits, and express sincere gratitude for their blessings. We live each day with appreciation and gratitude, and work for the benefit of the world through our daily duties.

This attitude is the foundation for peace and happiness in our family, society, country and the world.

*(Next issue: Learning from the Heart Sutra – Part 1)*



### Connecting the Dots

By Joyce Reid

Apple Founder Steve Jobs famously once said, “You can’t connect the dots looking forward. You can only connect them looking backwards.”

I’d like to relate my experience in connecting the dots over the past 15 years.

In early 2005, my husband **Paul** and I decided to move to Texas. Many people have asked us what prompted our move . . . and why Texas?

At that time, we were both extremely busy in our careers – Paul in construction management and I in corporate communications. We were both born and raised in Southern California. Our kids were grown and living away, but my mother and our friends were in the area, and I was involved in the Gedatsu Church.

A couple of years earlier, my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and was steadily declining. She was living with us in our home. I realized my mother needed around-the-clock care, so on Christmas Eve 2004, I asked Paul what he thought about my quitting my job to take care of her.

He answered without hesitation, “Whatever you need to do to care for your mother, go ahead. We’ll find a way.” I’ll never forget the profound kindness and generosity of his simple reply.

#### Decisions, actions and surprises

That conversation set into motion a whirlwind of actions. I called that very same night to my boss to resign from my work. After our working together for 25 years, she was shocked but understood.

Paul and I knew that with one income, we’d have to sell our house and move to a state with a lower cost of living – preferably one with a climate where we could play golf year-round. I remembered how pretty the Hill Country area of South Texas was when we once vacationed there, so the next weekend, we got on a plane to San Antonio to meet with a realtor and look for houses. After living in Southern California all our lives, we couldn’t believe how much more our money could buy in Texas – in housing, transportation, food, everything.

By April 2005, we had purchased a house, and by June, we had moved 1,400 miles to the San Antonio area.

By this time, the company I had worked for requested that I continue working for them as a contractor. What a surprise! So, I learned how to work from my home office, communicating electronically with my clients around the world – in Europe, China, India and the U.S. – at all hours of the day and night. I was able to stay at home and care for my mother, while continuing to work as a contractor.

Sadly, my mother – who was the reason for our decision to move – died the next spring. Actually, I was grateful that she didn’t linger for years and years with Alzheimer’s as many do.

#### Finding our place in new surroundings, culture

Paul and I have never regretted our move to Texas. We live in a small semi-rural town called Boerne (pronounced Bernie) in the Hill Country, about 25 miles northwest of San Antonio. We love the area, the people, the slower pace of living – but it was certainly a culture shift for us. We learned early on to avoid speaking politics, religion or gun rights. Conservative politics, the Bible, the NRA are big here.

When I retired working about nine years ago, I began looking for volunteer work with the elderly. I guess that was my mother’s influence. I worked at a senior center for a few years, but I wanted more challenging work. That’s when I learned about the national government Ombudsman Program that trains volunteers to be advocates of residents’ rights in nursing homes. After three months of intensive training with the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, I was certified as an ombudsman.

#### Advocating for the rights of nursing home residents

Each week, my ombudsman work takes me to local nursing homes, where I visit with the residents and their families, teach them about their rights, work with staff to resolve resident complaints and try to spot signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Most of the time, complaints revolve around the quality of the meals, aides answering call-lights too slowly, shower schedules or lost laundry. Sometimes, though, I get involved in

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more serious things like financial exploitation by a family member, verbal or physical abuse by staff, over-medication or unlawful evictions.

Most of all, I enjoy getting to know the residents. I meet them at the most vulnerable time in their lives, so I try to understand who they are, their backgrounds, their likes and dislikes – everything that helps me help them better.

Many of the residents are veterans, as well as ranchers and farmers, who've lived their entire lives in the region. Most of them are very religious, and they regularly attend Bible studies in the facilities.

A couple of years ago, one of the residents who was dying and in Hospice care, asked me to pray with her and her family. I knew she was a devout Lutheran, and I didn't want to offend them, so I recited "*Hannya Shingyo*" in a whisper. The woman's daughter saw my lips moving and asked me what I was saying. I told her it was the Heart Sutra and explained its meaning. She was so happy, and she told her mother. They asked me to repeat it, but aloud this time, which I did. I was glad I did that. The resident died peacefully a few days later. After that, several other residents have asked me to pray with them and recite the Heart Sutra. These experiences have shown me the common ground of various beliefs, despite differences in their practices.

#### More surprises, opportunities

A few years after I got into the ombudsman volunteer work, I was asked by **Rev. Yamada** to join him as editor of the *Gedatsu Companion*. I had 30 years of corporate communications experience, and I'd recently learned how I could do practically anything from my virtual office in Texas. So, I agreed, as long as I could revamp the publication. I got approval from the church Board of Directors to produce a more ambitious newsletter, with changes in content, format, commercial printing and method of distribution.

Little did I know how that decision would consume my life. With my ombudsman work, editorship of the *Companion*, and subsequent chairing of the Board of Directors, I can hardly call this latest chapter in my life "retirement." I've never been so busy – and now I rarely have time to play golf, which had been a reason for our move to this area in the first place.

But this gets me back to the point about not being able to connect the dots going forward. Little did I know 15 years ago, when we made the decision to move to Texas, that:

1. We were moving at the height of the housing market. We sold our Southern California home – and two others that we owned in the area – for more than our asking prices, and all within a week. A year-and-half after our move, the housing bubble collapsed.
2. I would be able to continue working my job from my Texas home . . . and earn even more as a contractor.
3. Becoming editor of the *Companion* newsletter would become my personal path to deeper Gedatsu study. Beginning with the May 2013 publication, I've now published 80 issues. Each issue requires me to carefully research and study the Gedatsu teaching through various publications, ministers' sermons and writings. What an education.
4. I have been spiritually enriched through my work with nursing home residents. Initially, I just wanted to help them in ways I tried to help my mother, but they've really helped me to deepen my sense of gratitude for being able to live and contribute each day.

Paul and I thank my mother for setting things in motion 15 years ago. We often say, "If it wasn't for Mom . . ."

Back then, we had no clue how the dots were being laid out, one by one, in front of us. Steve Jobs was right: you can't see the dots in front of you. It's only now, as we look back, that we can see how the Universe, in its great wisdom, connected them for us.



Paul and Joyce – still following the dots



## NOVEMBER 2019 OFFERINGS

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

**\$5–\$49:** M/M R. Nakatani, S. Tanaka, Anonymous

**\$50–\$99:** S. Taketa, J. Tanaka, M/M D. Tsuboi

**\$100+:** M/M S. Sekikawa, S. Taketa, J. Detwiler/J. Sebe,  
T. Wakabayashi, M/M D. Ide

**\$200+:** M/M J. Horner, *Senkakukan*, N. Burks, Rev. A. Sebe

#### **Special Acknowledgment**

M/M Dan Harada    Appreciation for 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary (\$100)

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

**\$5–\$49:** M/M K. Chinen, J. Choy, M/M M. Hamada,  
G. Hirami, K. Muronaka, H. Nakamura, A. Okimura,  
M/M S. Shiroishi, T. Toyama

**\$50–\$99:** M/M B. Hamamoto, M/M T. Hirami, J. Kaku,  
T. Masuda, M/M S. Mizokami, M/M S. Mukai,  
M/M M. Murakami, T. Murakami, M. Nakamura, M. Okada,  
M/M A. Shiroishi, De. Shiroishi, D. Takahashi, C. Tsujimura

**\$100+:** M/M F. Barthel, M/M N. Chodor, K. Fujii,  
M/M M. Ishida, M. Kimura, M/M K. Kuritani,  
M/M T. Matsumoto, M/M V. Mizokami, M/M C. Morioka,  
T. Nakamura, Y. Oishi, T. Okimura, J. Shiota,  
M/M H. Tsujimura, M/M R. Tsujimura, M/M K. Yamada

**\$200+:** M/M R. Allum, T. Ishida, J. Ito, S. Nishino

**\$300+:** Do. Shiroishi

**\$500+:** Gedatsu *Kendo Dojo*, S. Okimura

#### **Special Acknowledgment**

Tadao Ishida    Appreciation for Junnosuke/Eiko Ishida  
7<sup>th</sup>-year memorial and Hitoshi Ishida  
13<sup>th</sup>-year memorial service (\$1,000)

Tadao Ishida    “Never Forgotten” for Hitoshi and  
Fumio Ishida (\$100)

M/M Ho. Tsujimura    Success surgery (\$100)

N. Burks, S. Kuwahara,

J. Okazaki    In memory of Takashi Okazaki (\$3,000)

Imuta Family    “Never Forgotten” - George Imuta (\$100)

Kaku/Mahoney Families    “ - George Imuta (\$100)

Kimura Family    “Never Forgotten” for Ken Kimura (\$100)

M/M V. Mizokami    “Never Forgotten” service (\$100)

T. Okimura    “Never Forgotten” for Emiko Okimura  
and Mamaku Okimura (\$200)

Anthony Sanchez    “Appreciation for Linda Sanchez  
memorial service (\$150)

Tadashi Sato    Mariko Michiuye 3<sup>rd</sup>-year memorial (\$200)

#### **Goreichi Care Fund**

H. Graham    \$200

Rev. A. Sebe    \$1,000

## 2020 UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Apr 12 (Sun)    141<sup>st</sup> Spring Grand Festival 9:30 a.m.

May 10 (Sun)    Sacramento Mother’s Day Service  
May 17 (Sun)    L.A. Mother’s Day Service  
May 24 (Sun)    Sacramento plaque burning (*Joan-no-gi*)  
May 25 (Mon)    Sacramento Inter-religious  
Memorial Day Service  
May 26 (Tue)    Church Closed (in lieu of Memorial Day)

Jun 7 (Sun)    Sac’to Mother Kiyota Memorial Service  
Jun 21 (Sun)    L.A. Mother Kiyota Memorial Service  
Jun 27-28 (Sat-Sun) *Rokujizo* Bazaar Sacramento 11 am

Jul 4 (Thu)    Church Closed (Independence Day)  
Jul 12 (Sun)    Sac’to *Obon* Service / Graduates Honored  
Jul 19 (Sun)    L.A. *Obon* Service / Graduates Honored  
Jul 23-26 (Thu-Sun) Youth Camp – Sacramento

Aug 1-2 (Sat-Sun) Lake Tahoe *Benzaiten* Service (TBD)  
Aug 16 (Sun)    L.A. *Benzaiten* Service

Sep 6 (Sun)    142<sup>nd</sup> Fall Grand Festival 9:30 am  
Sep 8 (Tue)    Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)  
Sep 20 (Sun)    L.A. *Higan* Service

Oct 3-4 (Sat-Sun) L.A. Autumn Moon Festival  
Oct 13 (Tue)    Church Closed (in lieu of Columbus Day)  
Oct 18 (Sun)    L.A. *Ujigami* Service  
Oct 25 (Sun)    Sacramento All Souls Service

Nov 1 (Sun)    L.A. Gedatsu Kongo Service  
Nov 8 (Sun)    Sacramento Gedatsu Kongo Service  
Nov 15 (Sun)    L.A. 7-5-3 Children’s Celebration  
Nov 22 (Sun)    Sac’to 7-5-3- Children’s Celebration/  
Gedatsu Kongo Birthday  
Nov 26-27    Church Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Dec 6 (Sun)    L.A. Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service  
Dec 12 (Sat)    L.A. Church Clean-up  
Dec 13 (Sun)    Sacramento Last Service of Year /  
Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service  
Dec 20 (Sun)    L.A. Last Service / Christmas Program  
Dec 24-31    Church Closed

## 1 月度教会行事予定

### ロサンゼルス教会

1 日 (祝) 7:30A	新年参賀 (正午まで)
2 日・3 日	三が日休み
5 日 (日) 10:00A	日本語感謝会
12 日 (日) 10:00A	祥月追善法要
19 日 (日) 10:00A	日英・新年初感謝会 成人式・パトトラック・福引
21 日 (火)	振替休日 (キング牧師の日)
26 日 (日) 10:00A	英語感謝会 「若者ランチ」 リージョナル委員会

### サクラメント教会

1 日 (祝)	新年参賀
2 日・3 日	三が日休み
5 日 (日) 10:00A	祥月追善法要
12 日 (日) 9:30A	新年初感謝会 パトトラック・ギフト交換
19 日 (日) 1:00P	サンノゼ支部初感謝会
21 日 (火)	振替休日 (キング牧師の日)
26 日 (日) 9:30A	感謝会・リージョナル委員会

## 1 月度みさとし

「もろもろの善根は慈愛を根本となす」

金剛さまは「心は言葉にあらわれて、言葉は体の表現となる」と申されたが、われわれの態度や人柄は心のありようからにじみ出てくるものなのだ。誰かを真似ようとしたり、相手に対して心にもない振る舞いをしようとしても、しばらくはだまされることもあるかもしれないが、やがて必ずその本性は暴露されてしまうのである。心からにじみ出て来る人間性を隠すことは決してできない。誰に対しても慈愛の心をどこまでも深く培っていくところに、その人の何ともいえない温かい人柄があらわれてくるものである。お互い、そんな人間になりたいものだ。

## 誌 上 講 話

お歳暮でいただく

『立春大吉・如意萬寶』のお札について

山田 一雄

前

号でお話しした『歳徳靈魂・一陽来福』のお札と共に、年末には『立春大吉・如意萬寶 (によいまんぼう)』のお札も、「金剛さまからのお歳暮」として会員や希望者に無料で配られます。

『立春大吉・如意萬寶』のお札とは、どういう意味をもったお札でしょうか？ 今号では会員からしばし問われるそのような質問に対し、お答えしてまいりたいと思います。

立春とは何か？

「立

春」とは、一年の季節を二十四の節氣に分けた最初の節氣で、旧暦では一年の始まりとされています。暦の上ではこの日から春がスタートし、立夏の前日までを一般的に「春」と呼びます。(ちなみに立春、立夏、立秋、立冬という四つの季節の中日に、春分、夏至、秋分、冬至という節氣があり、さらにその八節の間に2つずつの節氣が加わり二十四節氣となります。(なお太陽の黄道上の位置によって算出されるので、必ずしも毎年同じ日付になるわけではありません。)

大自然の運行と共に生き、季節の巡りを生活の営みに取り入れてきた日本人にとっては、立春を基準にいろいろな習わしや節目の行事がありました。たとえば「八十八夜」は、立春を起算日とした八十八日目のことですが、そのころを過ぎると気候も安定することから、茶摘みなどに代表される農作業の目安などにされました。

立春は、春を迎えた新しい年のスタートであり、本年は2月4日が立春の日にあたります。いわば旧暦の新年で、その立春の前日である節分(2月3日)は、いわば旧暦の大晦日です。人々は節分に豆撒きをして厄を祓い、立春の日には年初として一年の幸福を呼び込む願いを込め、邪気を祓う縁起の良い言葉としての『立春大吉』のお札をお祀りするのが、古来より培われてきた日本の伝統文化的なしきたりなのです。

如意萬寶とは何か？

金

剛さまはこの『立春大吉』のお札に『如意萬寶 (によいまんぼう)』という祈願の言葉を添えてくださいました。

かつての本部での2月の報恩日の折り、私は岸田英山先生が、「この御五法の入った『立春大吉・如意萬寶』のお札は、金剛さまが会員の幸せのために神仏のお力を込められた、金剛さま独自の尊いお札である」というお勉強をされたことを覚えています。

「立春大吉」は、文字通り「大吉に満ちた新春＝年の始まり」であり、「如意萬寶」は、「意のごとく宝を招く」という深い意味があり、「祈る中に心からの意志と念を集中することによって、すべてが思うように

宝に変わる」という意味だというような説明をされたことを覚えています。

仏教に「如意宝珠（にょいほうじゅ）」という言葉があります。「一切の願いが自分の意の如くかなうという不思議な宝の珠（たま）」のことで、宝珠とは観音様が手に持たれている上部が円錐形になった珠のことです。（橋の欄干の上にある珠の形は、それを真似た擬宝珠と言います。）

それからわかるように、「如意萬寶」とは、「意のごとくあらゆるものが宝となる」という意味だと捉えていいと思います。これは余談ですが、当時の英山先生の説明は、現在なら、ジョセフ・マーフィーの潜在意識を活用した願望実現やアフメーションによる引き寄せなどの法則を持ちだし「心に深く願ったことが実現する」という法則で説明することもできるかなと思いました。

本会での節分会・豆まき式においては「福は内」を三回唱え最後に大きく「福は内」と言う三声一声という唱え方をします。金剛さまが唱道された方式で、「本来鬼はない」との教えから「鬼は外」を言わないのが本会のしきたりなのです。英山先生はそのことを説明されたあと、「立春大吉・如意萬寶」について、「本来は全てが恵みであり福であると悟るなかに、あらゆるものが宝となる」と説明されました。

立春の日、すなわち春の始まりと共にこのお札を玄関のドアの上（天空神さまの右側）にお祀りします。すなわち、『立春大吉・如意萬寶』は、春の到来を喜び福とする明るい気持ち、あらゆる恵みに感謝する気持ちでお祀りし祈る中、この一年あらゆるものが宝となり満たされていくという意味が込められたお札なのです。

## 『天五色大天空大神』のお札について

『**天**五色（あめごしき）大天空大神（だいてんくうおおがみ）』さまは、金剛さまがそのお働きを感得して、御霊地の天神地祇太神社殿の右側に祭祀された御守護大神さまの一柱です。空中を自在に飛翔し、威光に満ちたご神徳を備え、迅速（じんそく）自在（じざい）に働き、魔を排除（はいじょ）し、屈服（くつぷく）せしめるお力を示されます。

人間の霊性を向上させる御守護大神さまの一柱がありますが、魔を排除し屈服せしめる強いお働きがあることから、家の玄関にお祀りして祈り、『四方祓い』

のお札と共に、家屋や家人を邪気邪霊から守っていただく意味でお祀りします。

なお御霊地に祭神されている六柱の御守護大神さまは、日本古来の神名が使われている神霊もありますが、本社からの分霊によるものでなく、金剛さまの偉大なご霊力・御五法のご神力で御祭神された神々です。宇宙の五智を示す「天五色」や天の徳を讃える「天」などの称号が冠せられた金剛さまによる独特のご神名は、その最尊の神格を現されたものです。

尊い神札を感謝でお祀りさせていただきます。

## 掲 示 板

### ● 本年よりミカ・ロドリゲスさんが新開教師候補に

米国解脱教会理事会は、サクラメントの会員であるミカエラ・ロドリゲスさん（Micaela Rodriguez）を2020年1月より、新しい開教師候補生として任命し職員として採用します。Micaさんはサクラメント教会で事務の仕事をしてながら、米国開教師の指導の下で6か月から12か月の開教師訓練を受けるほか日本の御霊地で修業します。その後、開教師としての任命は岡野総長と開教師たちによりなされます。ミカさん（31歳）は、息子のポップ（14歳）と娘のアミ（10歳）の2児の母で、過去8年、検眼の分野で働いてきました。

### ● LA教会では成人式を始めます。

本年LA教会では、1月の第3日曜の日英・新年初感謝会において「成人式」を行なうことになりました。2020年に20歳になる若者がおりましたら、ぜひお早めに教会もしくはジョアン城石さんまでご連絡ください。

### ● LA教会では「若者の昼食クラブ」が始まります

本年よりLA教会では、毎月第4日曜の英語感謝会の直後、リフレッシュメントを兼ねて「若者の昼食クラブ」（Brunch with Youth）が剣道ホールで開催されることとなりました。ティーンエイジャーや二十代の若い人たちを中心に、若者同士でディスカッションやゲームなどをしながら親睦をはかります。解脱を学ぶ青年を育成する目的で、ファシリテーターはキャロラン平山さんが務めます。どうかお子様方の参加をご推奨ください。

## 訃 報

- サクラメント教会の会員ヘンリー・カルデロンさん（30歳）は、昨年11月に癌により逝去されました。ここに謹んで哀悼の意を表します。





The *Gedatsu Companion* is published monthly for members like **Stuart Shalkan** of the Los Angeles Church. He and his wife, **Pamela**, live in the Pasadena area. Stuart is a scientist/engineer with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), where he has worked for the past 28 years. His main project is Starshade, a project to image planets orbiting nearby stars.

Stuart was introduced to Gedatsu when he met Pam, who is the daughter of members, **Arlene** and **Rudy Tsujimura**. Their three children – **Sarah**, 21; **Jonathan**, 19; and **Andrew**, 16 – are now fourth-generation Gedatsu members.

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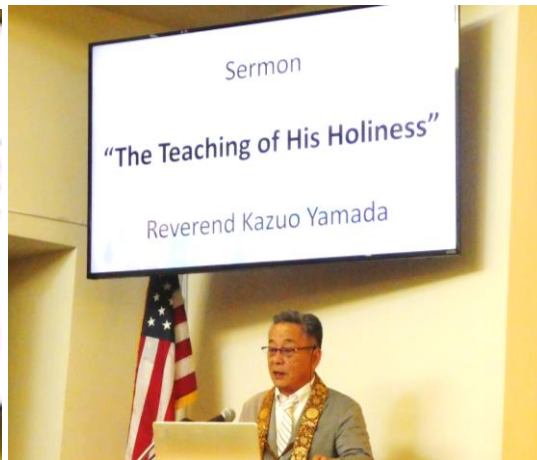
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*(Welcoming Church – Continued from page 4)*



Activities and other ideas to create a welcoming environment and grow our church will be discussed at the annual Propagation Meeting, which will be held at the L.A. Church on Friday, March 13. All members are encouraged to attend.



**After-service lunches and refreshments – featuring festive decorations and delicious dishes – encourage fellowship and conversation.**

**Digital displays add interest and clarity to Sunday services.**