



# GEDATSU COMPANION

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 News and Announcements
- 3 Around Our Church: Rev. Naoya's  
Miraculous Recovery / L.A.  
Women's Club's Monthly Programs
- 4 Congratulations to our 2025  
Graduates
- 5 "Gedatsu Teaching 5" and  
Commentary
- 7 June Offerings
- 8 Father's Day Celebrations

---

### Gedatsu Kongo's Thought for the Month

*"The true path of our life lies in a sincere heart that embraces everything we see, hear and touch."*

Gedatsu Kongo taught that our fundamental desire is to live with sincerity and beauty in our hearts.

Such a sincere and beautiful way of life becomes possible when we cultivate positive karmic connections through the teachings of Gedatsu.

When is it necessary to cultivate these connections? A clue lies in August's "Thought for the Month": "To embrace everything around us with appreciation and gratitude."

## AUGUST 2025

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	3	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	10		No Service
Tue	12	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	24	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Benzaiten</i> Service
<b>Sun</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>Fall Grand Festival</b>

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	3	10:00 am	<i>Hiho</i> Meditation Practice
Sun	10	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	17	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Benzaiten</i> Service
Thu	28	5:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Zoom
Sun	24	10:00 am	Japanese Cooking Class: Cold <i>soba</i> salad
Sun	31	9:30 am	Fall Grand Festival in Sacramento

### CHURCHWIDE

Sat	23	12 noon	Steering Team Meeting via Zoom
-----	----	---------	--------------------------------

## SEPTEMBER 2025

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Tue	2		Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
Sun	7	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Tue	9	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	14		No Service
Sun	28	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Rokujizo</i> Service

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Tue	2		Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
Sun	7	10:00 am	<i>Hiho</i> Meditation Practice
Sun	14	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	21	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Higan</i> Service Grandparents Recognition
Thu	25	5:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Zoom
Sun	28	10:00 am	Cooking Class: Hawaiian <i>mochi</i>



### August “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.

The Sacramento Spiritual Center will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, August 3, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **W. Royal Domingo, Chester Fukagawa, Hsueh Hung Horner, Shirley Nakamoto Hughley, Konami Ide, Kuma Kotabe Ide, Toshio Ide, Mitsu Ito, Nobuyoshi Ito, Rinpei Kino, Kiyota Mishima, George Nakayama, Yoshiye Ide Obu,** and **Katherine Kazuye Sato.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, August 10, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Masaru Akiyoshi, Mankichi Arakawa, Yoichi Aso, Masako Azama, Mario Boras, Aaron Chodor, Toku Dyson, William Ishibashi, Shige Ishida, Mitsu Ito, Nobuyoshi Ito, Kimiyo Kikuta, Masaru Kikuta, Sumishichi Kikuta, Dolores Kotts-Burns, Shoji Kusumoto, Haku Michigami, Glenn Mizuki, Junji Nakaguchi, Eryn Akemi Nakamura, Jim Nakamura, Toku Nishi, Masakazu Oishi, Margaret Masako Oyanagi, Umeko Sasano, Shizuye Shiroishi, Charles Stoner, Kijiro Taniguchi, Yuki Tanji, Nora Ayako Toguchi, Chohei Tomita, and Tomoe Toyama.**

### **Manbu Kuyo Service Application**

Twice a year, *Manbu Kuyo*, a memorial rite for spirits, is conducted on the holy grounds in Japan. As announced earlier this year, the price of certificates for *Manbu Kuyo* certificates has increased from \$2.50 to \$5. If you would like to apply for *Manbu Kuyo*, complete the application form with this issue, and submit it to your church by the end of August.

### **Obituary**

The Sacramento Spiritual Center sadly announces the passing of pioneer Gedatsu Church member, **Sadaye Tanaka**, who peacefully passed away on June 19 at the age of 103.

Sadaye Tanaka was predeceased by her husband **Kaoru “Karl” Tanaka**. She is survived by her son **Calvin (Stacie) Tanaka** and grandchildren, **Scott** and **Leslie**; daughter **Diana (Shuichi) Mukai** and grandsons **Jeffery** and **Bobby**; and daughter **June Tanaka**.



### **Fall Grand Festival**

**Sunday, August 31 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Gedatsu Spiritual Center, Sacramento**

Program I – Festival Service

Social Hall or outdoors, weather permitting

Program II – Gedatsu Kongo Memorial Tower

Enshrinement Ceremony

Program III – *Saito Goma* Fire Ceremony

- **Special guest:** Future Abbot, **Yotsugi Takayuki Okano** from *Gedatsu-kai* Japan, will deliver the keynote address.
- **Dress appropriately.** The day’s programs will be held in the Social Hall and/or outdoors. (The *Gochi* Sanctuary is no longer being used.) Take care to dress appropriately for the hot Sacramento weather.
- **Order your Saito Goma plaques by August 17.** Price per plaque is \$5. Application forms are available at your local church.
- **Reserve a lunch for Festival Sunday.** Lunches (hot/chili dogs, chips, water) will be available for \$10. Contact your local church to reserve a lunch.

### **Update on the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund**

Earlier this year, the church announced that the annual pledge for the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund would increase from \$600 to \$900, beginning in 2026. After receiving thoughtful feedback from members, the Board of Directors has decided to maintain the minimum annual pledge at \$600. Members are, of course, welcome to contribute more if they wish.

The purpose of the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund is to provide sustained financial support for the church’s long-term growth and development goals. Participation in the Fund requires an annual pledge of \$600, which is separate from general membership dues. Flexible payment options are available: one-time payment of \$600, two biannual payments of \$300, or 12 monthly payments of \$50. Application forms are available at your local church.



Rev. Naoya enjoys a meal with his mother and kids just days after returning home from the hospital.

### The Power of Prayer

#### **Reverend Naoya's Miraculous Recovery**

On June 16, **Reverend Naoya Okano** collapsed due to a serious heart condition. He remained unconscious for several days, during which time doctors worked tirelessly to stabilize his condition. Thanks to their dedicated care—and the daily heartfelt prayers of church members from both the U.S. and Japan—Rev. Naoya eventually regained consciousness.

Upon hearing the news, his parents, **Bishop Teruo Okano** and his wife, traveled from Japan to be at their son's side.

According to Bishop Okano, the outpouring of love and sincere prayers from the church community surely reached God and Master Gedatsu Kongo, offering spiritual support that helped guide Rev. Naoya through his remarkable recovery.

Indeed, the progress Rev. Naoya made during his two-week hospitalization has been nothing short of miraculous.

Now home with his wife, **Yuko**, and their three children—**Ryunosuke**, **Nanami**, and newborn son **Kotaro** — Rev. Naoya continues to recover steadily. He extends his heartfelt gratitude to all who offered prayers and support during this challenging time.



The Okano family posed for this photo shortly after the birth of their son – just five days before the medical incident.



#### **L.A. Women's Club Presents . . .**

The L.A. Church Women's Club, under the leadership of **Pam Shaklan**, announces its continuing program of monthly programs and activities focused on different cultures and traditions.

"Our fourth-Sunday programs are designed to bring members and non-members together in a variety of fun activities," says Pam. "These activities showcase and share the skills and expertise of our members and friends with others who are interested in learning. We invite everyone to attend."

#### Upcoming Events:



#### **Japanese Cooking Class Sunday, August 24, 10 a.m.**

Learn to prepare *zaru soba* cold-noodle salad/dressing and salmon/tofu salad with dressing.

- Class is instructed by **Judy Hamamoto**.
- Class is free with \$10 fee for ingredients. Donations are appreciated.
- To reserve a space, contact the church at (626) 288-1212 or **Pam Shaklan** at [pamshak@hotmail.com](mailto:pamshak@hotmail.com) or text (818) 216-4102.



#### **How to Make Hawaiian Mochi Sunday, September 28, 10 a.m**



#### **Craft & Bento Faire – Saturday, October 4 (11 to 4)**

- We're looking for craft vendors who'd like to sell their hand-crafted items. Know any crafters?
- We'll be making *bentos* and spam *musubis* for sale by preorder.
- We need help: preparing items, handling preorders, serving customers. Any help you can give – even for a few hours – is appreciated.
- Contact **Pam Shaklan** at [pamshak@hotmail.com](mailto:pamshak@hotmail.com) or text (818) 216-4102.

### Congratulations, 2025 Graduates!

*Five new 2025 scholastic graduates – children and grandchildren of Gedatsu members – were recognized this summer by the church for their outstanding achievements in reaching individual academic milestones. They will be awarded congratulatory certificates and monetary gifts or gift cards sponsored by the Los Angeles Church and Sacramento Spiritual Center.*

*Let's meet our 2025 graduates.*

#### Los Angeles Church

**Conner Kuritani**, 14, graduated from middle school and plans to enter high school in the fall. Parents: **Kevin and Camille Kuritani**. Grandparents: **Ken and Ikuko Kuritani**. Conner's hobbies include playing lacrosse, and his heroes are his brothers, "because they push me to be a better person."

**Cameron Kuritani**, 22, graduated from University of California, Berkeley, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics. He plans to move to Chicago to pursue a career in Finance. Parents: **Kevin and Camille Kuritani**. Grandparents: **Ken and Ikuko Kuritani**. His hobbies include spending time with friends and family, watching sports, and running, hiking, and skiing. His hero is his grandfather, "because he works extremely hard, and always puts family first."

**Justin Kim**, 22, graduated from San Diego State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Kinesiology. He plans to pursue a path in medical school. Parents: **Brad and Karen Kim**. Grandparents: **Victor and Marian Mizokami**. Justin's hobbies include working out at the gym, playing basketball and hanging out with friends. His heroes are his parents, "who inspire me every day."

#### Sacramento Spiritual Center

**Kess Reano**, 18, graduated from high school and plans to attend San Diego State University in the fall to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutritional Science. Her future plans include studying abroad and pursuing a career as a dietitian. Parents: **Tami and Rich Reano**. Grandparents: **Harriet and Sam Sekikawa**. Kess's hobbies include dance, cooking, baking, crocheting and gymnastics. She likes listening to music, attending concerts and collecting stickers.

**James Akashi**, 23, graduated *Cum Laude* from San Jose State University with a Master of Science degree in Accounting. His future plans and career goals include passing the CPA exam and working for a public accounting firm. Parents: **Pauline Tomita and Alaric Akashi**. Grandparents: **Sumi Akashi; Robert and Dorothy Tomita**. James likes learning Japanese, and his hobbies include music production and running. He cites his father as his hero.



Conner Kuritani



Cameron Kuritani



Justin Kim



Kess Reano



James Akashi

**Gedatsu Teaching 5**  
**By Seiken Okano (Gedatsu Kongo)**

*Gedatsu-kyo* monthly newsletter, August 18, 1935

**Translation by Reverend Hisakazu Taki**

*I have repeatedly stated that Gedatsu is highly sacred. Nothing can be achieved without practicing Gedatsu. Its truth is absolute and cannot be expressed in words. It can be understood only through self-awareness and self-realization.*

*(1) You should fully understand that knowledge is only necessary to know that knowledge is unnecessary. By observing the realities of our current society, you know that this is true.*

*(2) The advancements of modern civilization and human knowledge are beyond the imaginings of our forebears. One would have thought that these advancements would have eliminated man's worries and troubles, and that a paradise on earth would have been realized – with people enjoying their days in comfort. In fact, the opposite is true. A state of uneasiness has reached its peak today.*

*(3) As civilization advances with greater scientific knowledge, more people, rich and poor, suffer and agonize. Though material needs are satisfied, there is no peace of mind. Where is the luster of life, the brightness of spirituality? I cannot but lament the pitiful state of people's spirituality.*

*(4) The advancement of civilization is the manifestation of human desires. The accumulation of knowledge dims spiritual radiance – thereby expanding egoism and escalating desires. Knowledge gives birth to civilization, and civilization, in turn, creates additional cravings. Human desires are boundless. And because civilization has no limits, regardless to what extent it may go, desire does not help desire. Today, as knowledge increases, spiritual radiance grows dimmer. As civilization progresses, life's uncertainties only intensify.*

*(5) People admire only knowledge and do not seek enlightenment. Although there are people rich in spirituality, most of them are absorbed in extensive reading of foreign and domestic classics and writing about them. They spend no time seeking spiritual enlightenment. Therefore, they spend a lifetime in doubt.*

*Excessive knowledge confuses people as to life's purpose.*

*If you seek Gedatsu, there is no need to search for knowledge.*

*If you make no demands and have no attachments, you can learn a lot.*

*If you make no demands, you will have no confusions in your mind.*

*If you have no attachments, you will have peace of mind.*

*To perceive this truth is Gedatsu.*

*(Teaching 5 – continued from page 5)*



**Gedatsu Kongo lectures at the dedication ceremony of the Matsumoto Dojo in Nagano Prefecture, Japan, on June 18, 1935. With the exception of Tokyo, this Dojo was the first church branch established in the provincial area.**

### **Commentary on Gedatsu Teaching 5 By Reverend Hisakazu Taki**

This is Gedatsu Kongo's criticism of modern civilization. Comparing modern man's intellectual wealth with his spiritual poverty, he stated that, the more civilization advances with scientific knowledge, the more people suffer and agonize. His words urge us to ponder the fundamental nature of civilization. We have to reconsider the meaning of true happiness.

#### Academic knowledge, intellect are limited

First, Gedatsu Kongo stated, "You should fully understand that knowledge is only necessary to know that knowledge is unnecessary." These words may shock you, because we usually believe knowledge is indispensable for man. Modern people seek higher education and compete to acquire more knowledge. But Gedatsu Kongo questioned modern man's belief in knowledge. He stated that knowledge is only necessary to understand the limit of human intelligence.

Man's quest for more convenience and comfort has resulted in the present civilization. All the developments and progress of civilization might have assured greater happiness as well. But this is not true. People are suffering even greater today. This tells us that modern man's view about happiness and civilization should be seriously reconsidered.

On this point, Gedatsu Kongo stated: "The advancement of civilization is the manifestation of human desires. The accumulation of knowledge dims spiritual radiance – thereby expanding egoism and escalating desires. Knowledge gives birth to civilization, and civilization, in turn, creates additional cravings. Human desires are boundless. As civilization progresses, life's uncertainties only intensify."

These words clearly illustrate the nature of modern civilization.

#### Man's future depends on cultivating his spirituality

What is the way out of this egotistical civilization then? Gedatsu Kongo responded by stating that as long as man trusts his intellect only and ignores spirituality, the future of man and this planet is hopeless. However, if man truly recognizes the significance of spirituality and lives according to his spiritual nature, he may free himself from egoism and live in harmony with the universe.

Spirituality is not cultivated by intellectual education. It is cultivated only by religious faith and practice.

Without developing his spirituality, man cannot attain true peace of mind and happiness. Together with spirituality, man's knowledge can work to realize true happiness. The future of man depends on the development of man's spirituality. Gedatsu is the path to cultivate this spirituality within us through daily practice of appreciation and gratitude.



## JUNE 2025 OFFERINGS

### **Northern California** Total: \$14,210

General Donations: J. Detweiler / J. Sebe, M/M J. Horner, K. Ota Schubert, L. Tanaka, No Name, R. Ide, R. Nakatani, S. McSwain, M/M S. Sekikawa, S. Taketa, S. Yabut, T. Bartos, M/M S. Arase, M/M M. Mastalski, M/M C. Tanaka (\$500)

#### Special Acknowledgments

R./R. Tateishi "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Steven Tateishi  
M/M D. Tsuboi With gratitude, June "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service  
J. Tanaka "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Mihoko Tanaka and Steven Tateishi  
M/M D. Ide Appreciation and gratitude for June "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service  
M/M D. Tsuboi With gratitude for Appreciation / Father's Day / Mother Kiyota Services  
M/M D. Tsuboi In memory of Sadaye Tanaka  
J. Tanaka Appreciation and gratitude for Mother Kiyota Memorial Service  
M/M D. Ide Gratitude for June Appreciation, Father's Day and Mother Kiyota Memorial Services  
M/M D. Ide In memory of Sadaye Tanaka  
M/M P. Tateishi "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service appreciation  
M/M C. Tanaka *Tenjinchigi, Gochi Nyorai* and Gedatsu Kongo  
M/M C. Tanaka "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service appreciation  
S. Taketa In memory of Sadaye Tanaka  
M/M D. Tsuboi With gratitude monthly donation  
M/M C. Tanaka Tanaka and Mukai Social Hall appreciation  
M/M A. Kishida Sacramento Spiritual Center appreciation (\$10,000)

### **Southern California** Total: \$3,925

General: A. DeWitt, M/M M. Hamada, M/M T. Hiram, H. Inouye, T. Ishida, J. Kaku, A. Kojima, M/M T. Kojima, M/M K. Kuritani, M/M D. Mah, M/M T. Matsumoto, M/M S. Mukai, T. Murakami, P. Muronaka, M. Nakamura, Y. Oishi, M/M N. Okano, T. Okimura, A. Rico, M/M S. Shaklan, De. Shiroishi, Do. Shiroishi, M. Takahashi, N. Takaya, A. Tsujimura, M/M H. Tsujimura, T. Tsujimura.

#### Special Acknowledgments

M/M S. Shiroishi In memory of Philip Nakamura, Mary Yoshiko Otera, Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi  
De. Shiroishi In memory of Philip Nakamura, Mary Yoshiko Otera, Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi  
Do. Shiroishi In memory of Philip Nakamura, Mary Yoshiko Otera, Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi  
M/M M. Hamada In memory of Harry Arakawa, Ben Toguchi and Mother Kiyota  
Kaku/Mahoney Families In memory of Misuko Kaku  
M/M S. Mukai In memory of Manabu Mukai and Steven Tateishi  
J. Shiroishi In memory of Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi  
M/M N. Chodor In memory of Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi  
M/M Ho. Tsujimura In memory of June Yamamisaka, Russell Yamamisaka and Mother Kiyota  
M/M N. Okano Safe delivery of Kotaro Okano  
M/M K. Kuritani 80<sup>th</sup> birthday appreciation  
M/M K. Kuritani Cameron Kuritani's graduation from UC Berkeley

### **Online Donations:** Total: \$454

General: G. Iwata, D. Allum, S. Shiroishi, W. Young, H. Tsujimura, J. Reid, G. Hass

#### Special Acknowledgments

P. Tomita Appreciation for *Goshugyo* study

*Note: Special Acknowledgments are listed for gifts \$100+.  
Dollar amounts are shown for gifts \$500+.*



Editorial Office

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

Editorial Staff

**Joyce Reid**, Editor  
**Reverend Naoya Okano**, Advisor

Editorial contributions to this issue:

**Dave Ide, Mark Ishida, Mariko Locheo, Reverend Takao Kojima, Ikuko Kuritani, Reverend Naoya Okano, Deacon Jo Ann Shiroishi, Deacon June Tanaka, Reverend Hisakazu Taki, Pauline Tomita**

**Dads Honored in Father’s Day Programs in June**



At the L.A. Church, “Dads and Gents” posed for photo at left. Front row, from left: Tom Okimura, Toshimi Nahahama. Middle row, from left: Rev. Naoya Okano, Rev. Takao Kojima, Kim Katsumura Allen Shiroishi, Howard Tsujimura, Jackson Ito, Ken Kuritani, Mike Hamada. Back row, from left: Hiroyuki Fujita, Ron Pang, Lance Masuda, Tetsuya Matsumoto, Michael DeWitt, Nathan Scott, Sebastian Schmidt.



In Sacramento, dads posed for photo. Shown from left: Ted Bartos, Dennis Tsuboi, Dave Ide, Sam Sekikawa, Rich Reano and Calvin Tanaka. Each received a gift and enjoyed a potluck lunch with the congregation.



In L.A., Dads and Gents were gifted a bag of *arare/senbei*, Lotto ticket, and colorful paper ties made by Sunday Schoolers, who presented their fathers and grandfathers with a gift bag of treats. Immediately following the service everyone enjoyed lunch.