



GEDATSU COMPANION

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Gedatsu Kongo’s Thought for the Month

*“Humility is a pure and clear
awakening that renews
your way of life.”*

It seems that contemporary Western cultures, especially in the U.S., tend to undervalue moral attitudes, such as modesty and humility.

However, Gedatsu Kongo taught us that unless we live humbly – working in harmony with others in our daily lives and offering service and generosity for the sake of the world – we cannot receive the protection and guidance of God and our ancestors.

Let us take a moment to revisit the humble heart that respects and honors others.

DECEMBER 2025



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	7	10:00 am	“Never Forgotten” Memorial Service
Sun	14		No Service
Tue	16	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun-Wed	21-31		Church Closed (except for 12/28 service)
Sun	28	10:00 am	Last Appreciation Service of the Year / Social Hall Clean-up

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	7	10 am	<i>Hiho</i> Meditation Practice
Sun	14	10:00 am	“Never Forgotten” Memorial Service
Sun	21	10:00 am	Appreciation Service / Archbishop Kishida Memorial Service / Holiday Program & Potluck Luncheon
Mon – Wed	22-31		Church Closed

JANUARY 2026

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Thu	1	9:00 am	New Year Homage (until noon)
Sun	4	10:00 am	“Never Forgotten” Memorial Service
Sun	11		No Service
Tue	20		Church Close (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day)
Tue	20	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	25	10:00 am	New Year Appreciation Service

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Thu	1	7:30 am	New Year Homage (until noon)
Sun	4	10:00 am	<i>Hiho</i> Meditation Practice
Sun	11	10:00 am	“Never Forgotten” Memorial Service
Thu	15	5:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Zoom
Sun	18	10:00 am	New Year Appreciation Service
Tue	20		Church Close (in lieu of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day)
Sun	25	10:00 am	Cultural Event TBD



December “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, December 7, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Albert Ryoza Akiyama, Soshiro Hatae, Kanzaburo Ide, Kazuo Ide, Dorothy Keiko (Takemura) Nakamoto, Eizan Kishida, Shizuye Kodani, Tomiji Nakayama, Kiichi Ogawa, George Sekikawa, Mariko (Mizumoto) Takemura, Kiyoshi Tateishi, Tokio Tateishi, Tomota Tateishi, Atsuko Kawazoe Tsuboi, and Kimi Yamada.**

The Los Angeles Church will hold its “Never Forgotten” Memorial Service on **Sunday, December 14, at 10 a.m.**, honoring the souls of **Yoshio Arakawa, Glen Blaser, Consuelo T. Castillo, Glen Naoya Hiram, Eiko Ishida, Junnosuke Ishida, Natsu Grace Kikuchi, Chizu Kitagawa, Abel Martinez, Helen Akiko Matsumoto, Tatsumi Matsuura, Shizuyo Mizutani, Yoshokazu Nagahama, Helen Sachiko Nishida, Jonny Numata, Mitsuko Numata, Kou Helen Sakuma, Lily Yuriko Shiba, Sugi Shiba, Glenn Eichi Shimamoto, Dale Smith, Thomas Yasukiyo Sueyoshi, Koji Takahashi, Chisayo Taniguchi, Goro Gary Tanji, Ruby Toshiko Tanji, Shiro Paul Tanji, Tomota Tateishi, Gary Chin Toy, Toru Toyama, and Frank Yoshimichi Yamamoto.**

Obituary

The Los Angeles Gedatsu Church sadly announces the passing of **Mary Masako Kimura**, who died on September 22 at the age of 93. She was predeceased by her husband, **Ken Kimura**, and is survived by her children **David (Carol)** and **Andrew Kimura, Naomi (Ronald) Kageyama**, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Private internment services will be held at a later date.

Renew Your Church Membership for 2026

Annual Membership: Renewable annually

Individual	\$60 (including each child age 30+ living at home)
Family	\$100

Lifetime Membership: Pay your membership dues just once, instead of paying annually

Individual	\$600
Family	\$1,000

- Pay online – by credit card or ACH/bank payment – on the church website at www.gedatsu-usa.
- Or mail your check – made payable to Gedatsu Church USA – to your nearest church branch.

Support the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund

Donors to the Gedatsu Kongo Appreciation Fund provide sustaining dollars that help us achieve our longer-range plans for growth and development. Participation in the Fund requires an annual pledge of \$600, which is separate from general membership dues. Flexible payment options: one payment of \$600, two biannual payments of \$300, or 12 monthly payments of \$50. Application forms are available at your local church.

Update Your Contact Information

Please notify the L.A. Church of any changes to your home address, email address, phone/cellphone numbers. Member contact information is not published. Email **Rev. Naoya** at naoya.gedatsu@gmail.com, call at (626) 288-1212, or text at (626) 233-2359. Or email **Mariko Locheo** at locheo.gedatsu.lab@gmail.com.

Renew Your Holy Paper Plaques

The new year is the time to renew your holy paper plaques for placement throughout the home for the protection of the dwelling and happiness of its inhabitants. See your local church for details on types of plaques and prices.



Halloween Fun at L. A. Church



It was scary good fun for everyone at the October Appreciation Service at the L.A. Gedatsu Church. Children attending the service created trick-or-treat bags as part of their Sunday School project. Then they delighted in showing off their fun costumes in the Halloween Costume Parade and collecting goodies from the members. The congregation also enjoyed the treats: a delicious luncheon served on colorfully decorated, holiday-themed tables.



Thank you, Judy!

At the October Appreciation Service at the Sacramento Spiritual Center, the congregation warmly recognized **Judy Tsuboi** for her many years of leadership and volunteering for the church. **Chairman Dave Ide**, along with **Deacon June Tanaka**, presented Judy with a floral bouquet and a special gift.

Dave acknowledged that “Judy has been a Gedatsu member since the internment camp days at Tule Lake when her parents met **Mother Kiyota**.” He cited Judy’s tireless service in every aspect of church activities, from cleaning restrooms for the festivals and bazaars, floral arranging, and serving hot dogs with her husband **Dennis**.

Gedatsu Teaching 9 By Seiken Okano (Gedatsu Kongo)

Gedatsu-kyo monthly newsletter, January 18, 1936
Translation and commentary by Reverend Hisakazu Taki

Gedatsu is self-reflection, self-reform, self-renunciation and striving to achieve the highest morality. Follow the path of gratitude – the great path of God. Continually, from morning to night, appreciate and repay the blessings you receive, earnestly pursue your vocation, and observe the path of humanity, which is to benefit the world. This is why I say Gedatsu is sacred.

The great path of gratitude is to be aware of – and repay – the following blessings.

- 1. Without country, you have no home.*
- 2. Without parents, you cannot be born.*
- 3. Without society, you cannot exist.*

Demonstrate the qualities of integrity, filial piety, benevolence, fidelity and gratitude.

I assert the sacredness of Gedatsu because of the following:

- Reverence to God and ancestors*
- Spirit of loyalty and patriotism*
- Cultivation of good moral character*
- Harmony of heart and mind*
- Salvation of mankind*
- Appreciation and gratitude*

These truths form the foundation for your descendants' eternal prosperity. Therefore, please study them carefully. I hope you convey these points to your family, relatives and friends.

Religious faith should not be simply to rely on God for assistance. It is important to self-reflect, self-reform and sincerely practice the path of gratitude. Gedatsu is for your self-awareness and self-realization. This is why I say Gedatsu is sacred. Only through actual practice and effort will you achieve a positive outcome. Gedatsu rejects empty doctrines and theories. It urges you to self-reflect, self-reform and sincerely practice the teaching. You will then achieve the unity of supreme goodness, supreme truth and supreme beauty. Set this as your goal and achieve it through your sincere efforts.

You may deplore the deterioration of our present society, but you are wrong. Understand that we ourselves created this society, which consists of micro-societies of families – with each family consisting of a husband and wife. Thus, our society is an aggregate of families. Our societal deterioration has been caused by the misunderstanding and misconduct between couples. Children are born and raised in these small societies, consisting of husband and wife. Ponder this point. I hope that you reform yourself and work for the betterment of society. This is our God-given duty as humans. I especially urge parents who have small children to fully teach them the essence of Gedatsu.

In conclusion, I would like to say something. Please read the words of Ms. Asano of Kichijoji [in box, page 5], which teaches us the first step in our Gedatsu study. To know the path of Gedatsu could take a lifetime, or then again, it could be done in a day. It depends on your self-reflection and self-awareness. Please read this story and consider it seriously.

(Gedatsu Teaching – continued from page 4)

Experience of Ms. Asano

The following account of Ms. Asano of Kichijoji, Tokyo, was published in the Gedatsu-kyo monthly newsletter on January 18, 1936.

“I was a devoted believer of Kokekyo, or the Lotus Sutra. About three months ago, when I performed the Goho Shugyo practice, the spirit of Honorable Nichiren, who advocated Buddhist teaching based on the Lotus Sutra during the Kamakura period in 13th Century, advised me, ‘From today, you should listen to Gedatsu teaching.’ Later, I had a chance to hear a sermon by Gedatsu Kongo. He said that the Buddha, Kobo Daishi and Nichiren were not that great. To me, a staunch believer of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha and Honorable Nichiren are great teachers. I was shocked and confused by his words.

“About ten days ago, I came to understand Gedatsu Kongo’s true intent in saying those words. He stated, ‘You should be aware of the greatness of God, who allowed the Buddha, Nichiren and all the other great saints to work on earth for the salvation of mankind. Most people do not understand this point correctly. Please read the doctrine carefully and understand this.’

“When Gedatsu Kongo said these words with sincerity, I was filled with appreciation that my heart cleared. I then became a true Gedatsu member.”

Commentary on Gedatsu Teaching 9

In Teaching 9, Gedatsu Kongo again summarizes the Gedatsu teaching.

Self-reflection, self-reform and self-renunciation form the basic path of Gedatsu study. By practicing these self-disciplines – while putting forth your full effort without asking for anything in return – you will be able to attain true peace and happiness.

Gedatsu Kongo stated: “Without a country, you have no home. Without parents, you cannot be born. Without society, you cannot exist.” Thus, he stressed the importance of appreciating the blessings we receive from three of our greatest resources: country, parents and society. Our existence is impossible without them. This sense of appreciation is the core foundation for our happiness and world peace.

Religious faith is important for human life. However, many people have a mistaken view of religion and faith. Gedatsu Kongo urged us to correct our wrong attitude about religion.

Sincere, disciplined effort – not faith in God alone – builds one’s religious faith.

To believe and revere God is essential for our religious faith. However, if you feel you need not endeavor in your duties because you leave everything to God, you are wrong. You should totally trust God, but, at the same time, sincerely fulfill your duties in life. Sincere practice is essential for our religious faith.

Gedatsu Kongo stated that Gedatsu does not deal with empty theories, but, rather, puts self-reflection and self-realization into actual practice. “Many people fret over today’s problems,” he would say, “but no one has the solution.” Gedatsu is the path to actually solve the problems of the world.

The Founder explained how to reform our society. His solution may sound simplistic and ordinary, but it is the only means to reform the world. It is not a path of instant change, but one of gradual transformation, which requires time and continual effort.

Continued on page 6

(Gedatsu Teaching – continued from page 5)

Many people want instant changes to realize Utopia, and do not practice the required daily steps. Gedatsu Kongo stated that the current world condition is the result of this kind of wrongful thinking and attitudes in our past.

Social reform is built on the collective self-understanding and self-reform of each individual.

The Gedatsu path of self-understanding and self-reform leads to social reform. Gedatsu Kongo stated, “You may deplore the deterioration of the present society, but you are wrong.”

It is very important to recognize that society’s deterioration is not the problem of other people. In fact, it is *your* problem. This is because the world is a collection of smaller societies composed of families, couples and individuals. The cause of society’s deterioration is the lack of mutual understanding between a husband and wife. When those couples bear and raise their children, it is quite clear what the result will be.

How can we reform this world then? According to our Founder, there is no easy way. Each individual is the smallest unit of society, and a couple is the smallest society. With this in mind, practice self-reflection and self-reform in your daily life. From these initial steps, social reform is built.

Gedatsu Kongo refers to “the words of Ms. Asano of Kichijoji” – urging us to read her story to understand the true meaning of Gedatsu. Ms. Ko Asano is a Gedatsu member whose personal experience appeared in the Gedatsu monthly magazine.

“To know the path of Gedatsu could take a lifetime, or then again, it could be done in a day,” Gedatsu Kongo tells us. “It depends on your self-reflection and self-awareness.” If you miss this point, you will never understand Gedatsu, no matter how hard you study the doctrine or how diligently you perform *Amacha Kuyo*. Ms. Asano’s personal experience explains this point.

Ms. Asano was a devoted believer of *Hokekyo*, or Lotus Sutra, which is one of the holy Buddhist scriptures. After joining Gedatsu, she listened to Gedatsu Kongo’s sermons.

Gedatsu Kongo would sometimes state, “The Buddha, Kobo-Daishi and Honorable Nichiren are not that great.” [Kobo-Daishi is the founder of Shingon Buddhism. Nichiren is the founder of the Nichiren school of Buddhism, which is based on the Lotus Sutra.] Ms. Asano believed they were all great saints, so she could not understand why Gedatsu Kongo made that statement.

One day, Gedatsu Kongo explained by saying, “You must realize that a Universal God allows the Buddha, Nichiren and all the other great saints to work for the salvation of mankind.” These words cleared her doubts toward Gedatsu Kongo, and she truly understood the essence of Gedatsu.

This story explains a very important point in our Gedatsu study and practice. For believers of Nichiren school, Nichiren must be a great saint. The same is true of Kobo-Daishi to his followers. Buddhists respect the Buddha. Christians faithfully believe the greatness of Jesus. Moslems revere Mohammed most highly. Everyone respects the founder of his/her religion, and believes his/her religion is supreme. This is quite natural.

Strive to seek the Universal Truth.

However, if you believe that your religion is the only truth, and that all other religions are false, you will never be able to attain peace and harmony with people who believe other religions. Your exclusive dogmatism will only bring forth division and conflict among people. You see many such examples in world history.

The Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mohammed and Gedatsu Kongo are all great saints. It is good for you to strongly believe that the founder of your religion is great. However, you must understand that it is God who allows those great teachers to work for the salvation of mankind and world peace. We are all allowed to exist by this Universal God.

We believe in different religions, but the common element to all religions is the Universal Truth. We should see this common ground through each of our own paths. Gedatsu Kongo urged us to break through our sectarianism and to reach the Universal Truth, which is called Gedatsu.



OCTOBER 2025 OFFERINGS

Northern California Total: \$8,202

General Donations: J. Detwiler/J. Sebe, J. Hamamoto-Choy, M/M J. Horner, K. Kuritani, K. Tateishi, L. Taketa, M. Fukushima, M. Lumpkin, No Name, P. Harada, R. Ide, R. Nakatani, M/M R. Ito, S. McSwain, M/M S. Shaklan, T. Kojima, V. / S. Matsuura

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W. Dillon In memory of Marsha June Dillon

M/M D. Tsuboi With gratitude "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service

M/M D. Ide "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Motoji Ide

M/M M. Sunahara Memorial Tower induction for Fujiko Sunahara appreciation

J. Tanaka All Souls appreciation and gratitude

M/M D. Tsuboi With gratitude and appreciation and All Souls Service

M/M D. Ide Appreciation and Gratitude All Souls Monument and Appreciation Service

M/M C. Tanaka "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service appreciation

M/M D. Mah *Goreichi* donation

Southern California Total: \$3,120

General: M/M K. Chinen, A. DeWitt, K. Fujii, M/M M. Hamada, J. Kaku, M/M T. Kojima, K. Kuritani, M/M K. Kuritani, M/M D. Mah, M/M T. Matsumoto, Anonymous, M/M V. Mizokami, T. Murakami. E. Ogawa, H. Ogawa, Y. Oishi, M/M N. Okano, M/M S. Shaklan, D. Shiroishi, Y. Sira, J. Tanaka, A. Tsujimura, M/M H. Tsujimura, A. Yamashita

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M/M H. Tsujimura "Never Forgotten" in memory of Roger Nishida and Loretta Tsujimura

Do. Shiroishi Appreciation for Grand Festival at Sacramento *Goreichi*

M/M S. Mukai Appreciation and gratitude to Gedatsu Kongo

Online Donations: Total: \$506

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



Backflow Valve Stolen — Assistance Needed

Recently, the L.A. Gedatsu Church discovered that the backflow prevention valve on the main water line had been removed and stolen. Thanks to the quick response of **Kenny Kuritani** and **Paul Nakamura**, the water leakage was stopped, and the pipes were safely capped. A replacement backflow valve will cost approximately \$2,000 plus labor – an amount just under our insurance deductible, so no claim can be filed. The church is humbly requesting assistance from members to help cover the cost of this necessary repair. Any contribution, large or small, is sincerely appreciated.



GEDATSU CHURCH USA

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Living in Faith

By **Archbishop Eizan Kishida**

March 1973

The ultimate in faith lies in faith and belief in God. Faith, in this religious context, includes reverence coupled with belief.

There are some people who practice their religious faith not out of reverence toward God, but for selfish motives. These people seek success and happiness for themselves, and as long as everything goes smoothly, they continue to “practice their faith.” However, when business situations turn adverse due to political or social circumstances, or when they become ill as a result of unhealthy living habits, their so-called faith collapses and no longer serves as a sustaining force.

It is natural for a businessperson to enjoy a profitable enterprise. Yet, it is rare for anyone to experience uninterrupted success in any endeavor. There are bound to be ups and downs in every occupation. Adversities strengthen one’s will and sharpen one’s wits. Success and happiness belong to those who do not fear hardship, but who appreciate its value and strive forward with vigor.

Humans can understand the laws that govern them by studying Nature. A tree brings forth new buds in spring that blossom into beautiful flowers. It then bears fruit, sheds its leaves, and enters dormancy—a necessary process for revitalization and renewal.

If a person abuses his body by denying it sufficient rest or by overeating, he will impair his physical health. A person who has been stricken with an ailment can, through introspection, come to understand the causes of his illness. Such reflection often reveals that there was something negative in his way of life or attitude that contributed to his condition. One can even learn to appreciate an illness once he understands the true reason for its appearance.

One who truly appreciates the blessings of God and the ancestors will have within him a firm faith and conviction that can carry him through all forms of hardship. Egotism or stubbornness should never be mistaken for faith.

Followers of the faith must guard against allowing presumptuousness to replace their earlier spirit of obedience. This is just as harmful as a teacher who takes credit for a disciple’s accomplishments, yet blames the disciple when problems arise.

When obedience gives way to presumptuousness, that person becomes just another individual seeking worldly success. Therefore, one should continually engage in self-analysis to examine any signs of spiritual laxity. Failure to practice such self-examination inevitably leads to problems. When these problems arise, such a person tends to place the blame on others and, as a result, sinks deeper into adversity and frustration.

