

GEDATSU COMPANION

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Gedatsu Kongo's Thought for the Month

*"With their souls united in
perfect harmony, our ancestors
built the world of today."*

The fact that we are allowed to live in this modern era — sleeping soundly in safe homes, living in communities with well-built housing, and being free to devote ourselves to work and study — is something we should never take for granted.

These blessings exist because our ancestors worked tirelessly, often at great personal sacrifice, and prayed for peace for the sake of future generations.

This is a truth we must never forget.

At the same time, we must realize that we, too, will one day become the ancestors of the "descendants of the future." We have a responsibility to build a society in which our descendants can lead peaceful and fulfilling lives.

AUGUST 2026

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	2	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	9		No Service
Tue	11	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	23	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Benzaiten</i> Service

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	2	10:00 am	<i>Hiho</i> Meditation Practice
Sun	9	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	16	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Benzaiten</i> Service
Thu	20	5:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Zoom
Sun	23	10:00 am	<i>Shakyu</i> Class – Writing <i>Hannya Shingyo</i>

CHURCHWIDE

Sat	22	1:00 pm	Festival Planning Meeting via Zoom
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SEPTEMBER 2026

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	6	9:30 am	Fall Grand Festival
Tue	8		Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
Wed	9	7:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Google Meet
Sun	13	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	20		No Service
Sun	27	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Rokujizo</i> Service

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sun	6	9:30 am	Fall Grand Festival in Sacramento
Tue	8		Church Closed (in lieu of Labor Day)
Sun	13	10:00 am	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
Sun	20	10:00 am	Appreciation and <i>Higan</i> Service Grandparents Recognition
Thu	24	5:00 pm	Regional Board Meeting via Zoom
Sun	27	10:00 am	<i>Ikebana</i> Flower Arrangement Class



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.

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, August 2, 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 9, 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. The price of certificates for *Manbu Kuyo* certificates is \$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.

Minister Schedules

Reverend Naoya Okano will vacation in Japan from July 21 through August 13. During his absence, regular services and activities at the Los Angeles Church will continue under **Reverend Takao Kojima.**

Fall Grand Festival

Sunday, September 6 – 9:30 a.m.

Gedatsu Spiritual Center, Sacramento

Program I – Festival Service

At Universal Life Force *Tenjinchigi* shrine

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
- **Dress appropriately for the hot Sacramento weather.**
- **Order your *Saito Goma* plaques by August 16.** Price per plaque is \$5.
- **Reserve a lunch for Festival Sunday.** Lunches will be available for \$10. Menu to be announced.



Volunteers Needed to Help Our Church

Now that the financial outlook for our Gedatsu Church has improved, we are turning our attention to the next important step: implementing key priorities that will help us achieve sustainable growth and long-term stability for the years ahead.

To guide this effort, the Board of Directors has established a **Steering Committee** to identify and evaluate the most significant challenges facing our church. The committee has been authorized to oversee strategic initiatives, coordinate implementation efforts, and monitor progress to ensure that meaningful changes are carried out in a timely, effective, and accountable manner.

The success of this effort depends on the participation and commitment of our members. We are **seeking volunteers to serve on project teams** that will focus on key areas of church life, including propagation, membership growth, leadership development and other important priorities.

Working under the guidance of the Steering Committee, each project team will study issues, develop recommendations, and help implement initiatives. Teams will meet weekly—or as needed—and most meetings will be conducted by telephone or video conference, allowing members to participate conveniently from home.

If Gedatsu has enriched your life, we invite you to **consider this opportunity to help your church.** To volunteer or for more information, contact **Rev. Takao Kojima** at the L.A. Church or **June Tanaka** at the Sacramento Spiritual Center.

Dads Honored and Thanked in Father's Day Programs



At the L.A. Church . . .

Dads and "gents" were presented gifts (snack and scratcher) and posed for the photo at left. Front row, from left: Paul Nakamura, Tomishi Hiram, Rev. Takao Kojima, Tom Okimura, Toshimi Nagahama, Jackson Ito, Scott Shiroishi, Howard Tsujimura. Middle row, from left: Rev. Naoya Okano, Lance Masuda, Kim Katsumura, Allen Shiroishi, Tetsuya Matsumoto, Victor Mizokami, Max Martinez, Kenny Kuritani. Back row, from left: Michael DeWitt, Hiroyuki Fujita, Ron Pang, Greg Wood.

At the Sacramento Spiritual Center . . .

Dads posed for photo at right. From left: Dave Ide, John Horner, and Dennis Tsuboi. Each dad received a variety of cookies and snacks and enjoyed a potluck luncheon with members.



The program included a presentation by Pam Shaklan on the history of Father's Day, followed by a video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z09uGK16Ac>.



Appreciating a Traditional Art Form



The L.A. Women's Club's latest culture class was a great success, as members and friends gathered to learn the centuries-old Japanese art of *Kokedama*. This unique planting technique involves encasing a plant's root ball in a special soil mixture, wrapping it in sheet moss and securing it with twine.

The class was enthusiastically led by Janet Hirayama (standing at far right in group photo), who explained how these decorative arrangements bring harmony and prosperity into the home. She reflected on how teaching the class was a source of spiritual growth and personal fulfillment for her.



Congratulations, 2026 Graduates!

Seven new 2026 scholastic graduates – children and grandchildren of Gedatsu members – were recognized this summer by the church for achieving important academic milestones. Each graduate received a congratulatory certificate along with a monetary gift or gift card sponsored by the L.A. Gedatsu Sunday School and Sacramento Spiritual Center.

Los Angeles Church

Meika Hensley, 11, graduated from elementary school and will enter middle school this fall. She is the daughter of **Midori Hensley** and granddaughter of **Greg and Akemi Wood**. Meika enjoys drawing, animation, digital art, creating original characters, and cosplay. Her hero is her mom because “she loves me a lot and gives the best hugs!”

Emiko Hensley, 14, graduated from middle school and will begin high school this fall. She is the daughter of **Midori Hensley** and granddaughter of **Greg and Akimi Wood**. Emiko hopes to pursue a career in art, animation, or music. Her hobbies include singing, drawing, and reading. She admires singer Chappell Roan for her confidence, saying, “She isn’t afraid to be who she is.”

Carson Kuritani, 18, graduated *magna cum laude* from high school and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He is the son of **Camille and Kevin Kuritani** and grandson of **Ikuko and Ken Kuritani**. Carson plans to attend the University of Southern California this fall. He enjoys running, art, and spending time with family and friends. He says his parents are his heroes because they are “always supporting and loving me.”

Ethan Mizokami, 14, graduated from middle school with honors and will enter high school this fall. He is the son of **Jenny and Steve Mizokami** and grandson of **Marian and Victor Mizokami**. Ethan enjoys tennis, photography, and video games. His role models are his parents, whom he describes as “caring, funny, empathetic and wise.”

Andrew Shaklan, 22, graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Labor Studies. He is the son of **Pam and Stuart Shaklan** and grandson of **Arlene Tsujimura and the late Rudy Tsujimura**. Andrew hopes to pursue a career in business development. His interests include golf, comedy shows, Dodgers baseball, and assembling bunks with his brother. His father is his hero because “he taught me that knowledge is power and that education and curiosity are essential for personal growth and success.”

Sacramento Spiritual Center

Colin Graff, 11, graduated from elementary school and will enter middle school this fall. He is the son of **Linzie Fukushima and Chris Graff** and grandson of **Margie and Robert Fukushima, Diane and Terry Housely and John Pierce**. Colin enjoys reading, playing video games, golfing, and spending time with his cousins at sleepovers and swimming.

Gwynevere Ramey, 13, graduated from middle school and will begin high school this fall. She is the daughter of **Allison Horner and Davis Vongkhamchanh** and granddaughter of **Nancy and John Horner**. Gwynevere hopes to pursue a career in architecture or foreign languages. Her hobbies include anime, gaming and listening to K-pop music.



Meika Hensley



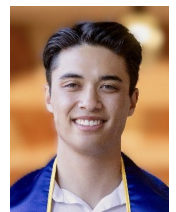
Emiko Hensley



Carson Kuritani



Ethan Mizokami



Andrew Shaklan



Colin Graff

Gwynevere Ramey
(photo unavailable)

Gedatsu Study Series: "The Practice of Humility,
Poverty, and Death" – Part 5

"The Practice of Humility" – Part 3

*Translated and reprinted from
The Gedatsu Magazine in Japan in 2022*

This month, we will examine why traits like "cleverness" and "logic" become habitual, and we will learn the fundamental attitudes and common pitfalls in the "Practice of Humility."

Spiritual Tradition and Habit

The reason why "cleverness," "logic," "vanity," and "self-conceit" surface so effortlessly is that they are rooted in our ancestral spiritual tradition, reinforced by the habits we repeat daily. Gedatsu Kongo provided the following guidance on the formation of these spiritual traditions:

"What you think becomes a seed, and what you say becomes a seed. Your daily thoughts and words become the cause, which, in time, bears fruit. Thoughts and idle chatter produced unconsciously are what create bad fruit."



"Human beings can only perform what they have truly mastered. What has been learned, practiced, and embodied over generations—that is what we can do."

"Getting angry when criticized, feeling jealous, or becoming impatient—these occur because you have mastered them. Once mastered, you can do them without even being taught."

"It is quite a feat that only what is truly mastered emerges instantaneously. For the 'Gedatsu Spirit' to emerge just as spontaneously, it would likely take three generations, finally manifesting from the fourth."

"Our thoughts, or mind, are revealed in our words, and our words are then expressed in our actions."

From these teachings, the process by which a spiritual tradition is formed becomes clear: Our internal thoughts—our perspectives and mindsets—translate into our words, actions, and attitudes. Through constant repetition in daily life, these patterns become so 'mastered' that they surface spontaneously and unconsciously in a split second.

There is a saying, "Habit becomes second nature." This applies not only to individual character but also to the lineage of a family. Through ancestral repetition, children are born with these inherent tendencies. In Gedatsu, we call this innate disposition the "family tradition" or "karma."

Family traditions can be both positive and negative. A primary goal of the Gedatsu teachings is "reformation of one's mind" —the transformation of negative family traditions. To achieve this, we must first correct our way of thinking and then practice that new mindset in our daily lives until it becomes our very nature.

Self-Growth and Mutual Prosperity

The absolute prerequisite for any "practice of humility" is that it must lead to self-growth, mutual prosperity, and appreciation and gratitude.

(Continued on page 6)

("Humility" – continued from page 5)

The place to practice is everywhere in daily life: home, school, and the workplace. The most vital areas are work (vocation) and relationships. Work includes not just professional jobs but also housework and childcare. Relationships include those between spouses, parents, and children.



Common Misconceptions

First, the "practice of humility" is neither "not using your head" nor "ceasing to think."

Gedatsu Kongo valued reflection deeply. He taught: *"Reflection is the bridge to Gedatsu."* He was known to scold those who didn't think as being "brainless."

There is a teaching to "not use your lantern-head," which refers to avoiding the useless or negative thoughts that arise when one is idle or petty—not an instruction to stop constructive thinking.

We should use our minds to reflect on our "clever" tendencies and think about *how* to practice humility effectively.

Second, becoming a "fool" does not mean "suppressing emotions." To feel the blessings of God, one must have the sensitivity to perceive the truth behind reality.

Gedatsu Kongo often spoke of the value of tears: *"Unless you know the taste and value of tears, you will never truly understand the value of Gedatsu."*



Gedatsu Kongo called tears "cells of Gedatsu" and "messenger of God." A rich sensitivity makes the practice of humility profound.

Finally, because the goals of practice of humility are self-growth, mutual prosperity, love, and appreciation, the practice must be rooted in compassion for others. The practice should benefit yourself and others. Sacrificing others is out of the question but being self-deprecating or harmful to oneself is also forbidden.

The fundamental stance is found in this teaching:

*"Keep the mind high and the body low. Becoming a 'fool' (humble) is the prerequisite for becoming truly wise; acting 'clever' is proof that one has already become a fool." **

Keep your ideals and aspirations high, while remaining devoted and humble in your daily conduct.



* From the "Holy Precepts of the Gedatsu Church," Volume 3, published by *Gedatsu-kai* Japan

JUNE 2026 OFFERINGS

Northern California Total: \$4,087

General Donations: A. Sebe, J. Detwiler / J. Sebe, M/M J. Horner, K. Ota-Schubert, M. Fukushima, No Name, R. Ide, R. Nakatani

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M/M D. Tsuboi	With gratitude, June "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
M/M P. Tateishi	Appreciation for "Never Forgotten" Memorial Service
M/M D. Ide	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service in memory of Motokichi Ide
A. Akashi/P. Tomita	Mother's Day Appreciation
J. Tanaka	"Never Forgotten" Memorial service for Sadaye Tanaka, Mihoko Tanaka, Steven Tateishi
J. Tanaka	Appreciation and gratitude for Father's Day and Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
M/M D. Tsuboi	With gratitude, Father's Day and Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
M/M D. Ide	Appreciation, ancestor blessing, Father's Day and Mother Kiyota Memorial Service
J. Tanaka	One-year memorial service for Sadaye Tanaka
M/M C. Tanaka	"Never Forgotten" Memorial Service appreciation
M/M D. Tsuboi	With gratitude, monthly donation
M/M C. Tanaka	Appreciation for use of church for one-year memorial service
M/M S. Mukai	Appreciation and gratitude for mother / grandmother one-year memorial service (\$500)
A. Sebe	Appreciation from Tanaka/Mukai family for performing mother/grandmother's memorial service and kindness and help over the years (\$500)

Southern California Total: \$4,655

General Donations: M. Chinen, A. DeWitt, M/M T. Hiram, H. Inouye, T. Ishida, J. Kaku, M/M T. Kojima, M/M K. Kuritani, M/M T. Matsumoto, M/M V. Mizokami, M/M S. Mukai, T. Murakami, P. Muronaka, M. Nakamura, Y. Oishi, M/M N. Okano, T. Okimura, M/M S. Shalkan, M/M A. Shiroishi, De. Shiroishi, Do. Shiroishi, M. Takahashi, N. Takara, A. Tsujimura, M/M H. Tsujimura, M/M G. Wood

Special Acknowledgments

De. Shiroishi	"Never Forgotten" Service for Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi, Philip Nakamura, Yoshiko Otera
Do. Shiroishi	"Never Forgotten" Service for Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi, Philip Nakamura, Yoshiko Otera
M/M A. Shiroishi	For safe baby birth
M/M S. Mukai	"Never Forgotten" Service for Sadaye Tanaka, Manabu Mukai, and Steven Tateishi
J. Tanaka	"Never Forgotten" Service for Sadaye Tanaka, Manabu Mukai, and Steven Tateishi
A. Tsujimura	In memory of Roy Shiba, Edward Kuritani, June and Russell Yamamisaka, Mother Kiyota
N. Morika	In memory of June Morioka
K. Chinen	For Chinen Family
Kaku, Mahoney, Imuta Families	"Never Forgotten" Service for Mitsuko Kaku and Shig Imuta
M/M Ho. Tsujimura	In memory of Jane and Russell Yamamisaka, Mother Kiyota
Sc. Shiroishi	"Never Forgotten" Service for Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi, Phillip Nakamura, Yoshiko Otera
J. Shiroishi	"Never Forgotten" Service for Hidekichi and Tsuna Shiroishi
M/M G. Wood	In memory of Tameharu Nagao
M/M C. Morioka	In memory of June Morioka
A. Tsujimura	Appreciation for grandson's college graduation

Online Donations: Total: \$326

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

Note: Special Acknowledgments are listed for gifts \$100+.

Dollar amounts are shown for gifts \$500+.



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Gedatsu Church's 4th Annual Bento & Holiday Craft Fair

will feature a wonderful selection of original handcrafted items – including jewelry, knitwear, baked goods, and many other unique creations. Find that one-of-a-kind gift for everyone on your holiday shopping list, while supporting talented local artisans and crafters.

Interested in becoming a vendor? Contact **Pam Shaklan** at (818) 216-4102 or pamshak@hotmail.com.

We will also be selling our popular **teriyaki chicken bentos** for \$12. Pre-orders will begin August 22 – September 26. **Inari sushi** for \$6.

To pre-order bento boxes, scan the QR code:

