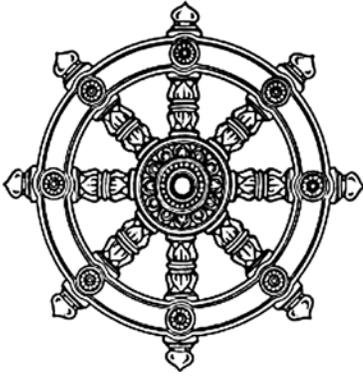


**Resident  
Minister**  
Rev. Matt Hamasaki



**Light Up Your Life**

It's now the toward the end of the holiday season and it's probably about time for people to start thinking about taking down their decorations (from what I hear from people, it's tacky to leave them up all year round, but that's just what people have said to me). This is a bit sad for me because I do enjoy seeing all the wonderful things the neighborhood takes the time and effort to put up. One of the particular decorations that I enjoy seeing are the Christmas lights that light up the long nights. I began to wonder what the history of these lights were....

The Christmas lights' origin can be traced back to the Christmas tree's origin. If we go back to when they became popular as we know them today, having a tree indoors celebrated by a familial unit, it is from early modern German Christians who began this tradition. The lights on the tree were believed to represent Christ being the light of this world. This tradition, however, can be followed even further back to a pagan winter tradition that celebrates the return of the longer days and more sun (since the days got shorter and the nights longer after the solstice), and the evergreen trees representing perseverance of life throughout dark times.

Back in the day, candles were used instead of electric lights. According to legend, a Protestant preacher was walking home one winter evening thinking about the sermon he was going to give. He was amazed by the brilliant stars overhead and tried to  
**(Continued on page 3)**

**Buddhist Church of Sacramento**  
2401 Riverside Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95818

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# SANGHA

**Sacramento Buddhist Church**  
**Volume 57 Number 1 – January 2020**

**Sacramento  
Betsuin**  
2401 Riverside Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95818  
(916) 446-0121  
(916) 446-1866 FAX  
betsuinoffice@gmail.com

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## Resident Minister (Continued)

recreate the feeling for his family by putting up a tree and decorating it with candles. First being attached with melted wax or pins, they eventually used lanterns, and eventually electricity.

No matter how people decorate their homes, it always makes me happy to see how people will try to add a little bit of holiday cheer to their street and spread to the passersby. I think it's an awesome display of giving because for all the effort, potential hazard, and cost that comes with these decorations, it's for the enjoyment of all with very little, if any, benefit to those who put them up. There are constant lessons for us to take away from the holidays of how we should live, and this is another one that can help us throughout the darkness of winter and the coldness of tough times.

We can get through it all if we can stop and appreciate how much others will do for us and if we take the time to do something for others, just for the sake of being merry.

## Interim Rinban & Supervising Minister Rev. Marvin Harada

### Interested in Taiko at the Betsuin? Meeting: January 5

There will be a meeting for anyone who is interested in being in and starting a taiko group at the Betsuin, on Sunday, January 5, at 11:30 a.m. in Classrooms 1 and 4.

A number of people have expressed an interest in starting a group. At the Orange County Buddhist Church, we have had taiko for about 40 years now. Ours is a family-oriented taiko group with youth from the age of 10, all the way up to senior citizens. Our group performs at many temple and community events, and has even performed at Dodgers Stadium, Angels Stadium, and at a Clippers game. Taiko is a wonderful activity that is also a way to express and learn Buddhism. It is dynamic, musical, and is an activity that is cross-generational. Taiko is even being used recently for senior citizens as a way to enhance memory and for exercise.

Since we will be starting from the ground up, many things have to be discussed and done, like building the drums for the group, first of all. This first meeting will be to see if there is enough interest to pursue starting a group. Anyone interested is invited to attend the initial kick off meeting on Sunday, January 5, around 11:30 a.m., Classrooms 1 and 4.

## President's Message Stuart Ito

Welcome to 2020! As we jet forward into the New Year, it is also important to look back at the year just past. Under the thoughtful guidance of our interim Rinban, Reverend Marvin Harada, and the energetic presence of Reverend Matt Hamasaki, our temple once again had a wonderful year.

In April 2020, Reverend Harada will transition to his new role as Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America. We wish him the very best as he guides the BCA forward and thank him for the past 2+ years of service to our temple.

Since Reverend Harada was here only on a part-time basis, much of the workload was shared between Reverend Matt and the minister assistants. Thank you to Reverend Matt and all of our temple minister assistants — Reverend Tim Castle, Sensei Grace Hatano, Sensei Kelvin Mark, Sensei Koichi Mizushima and Sensei Keith Kato — for all they have done over the many years to make the temple such an important part of our sangha's lives.

As I ended my first year as President, I am deeply grateful for all the ministerial staff, office staff, and all the volunteers who work tirelessly throughout the year for the betterment of our sangha. The temple calendar is very packed with activities, day and night. Managing all this activity is quite challenging and I have to give tremendous credit to our entire office staff, and especially the office manager, Cindy Kitade, who puts forth an incredible and tireless effort to make sure our temple and sangha members are taken care of in every detail.

I hope you all had a wonderful New Year celebration with family and friends, and wish you all the best for a prosperous 2020.

## Remember: New Email Address for SANGHA

All submissions (text, photographs, artwork, etc.) to the SANGHA editor should be addressed to [SBCSangha@gmail.com](mailto:SBCSangha@gmail.com), instead of the previous [lanset.com](mailto:lanset.com) address. Two older computers have been replaced by ones that have difficulties receiving lanset email.

Please continue to send SANGHA information to the Buddhist Church office by cc'ing [betsuinoffice@gmail.com](mailto:betsuinoffice@gmail.com) with all submissions. It is helpful to send photos and other artwork as separate attachments in the emails, and not embedded within the text copy to ensure the highest quality in the reproduction of the art.

Thank you for your understanding.

**Sacramento  
Buddhist  
Women's  
Association**  
Keiko Jean Kashiwada



Reverend Marvin Harada  
(714) 323-6843 cell  
marvinharada@gmail.com



Reverend Matt Hamasaki  
(916) 926-2221  
Mnhamasaki@gmail.com



President Stuart Ito  
stito1@gmail.com

We began our December monthly SBWA Board meeting with a meaningful message by Reverend Matt Hamasaki. We certainly appreciate his active participation in SBWA meetings and activities.

We sincerely appreciate the generous donations to our organization. The donations received in December are listed in the "Donations" section at the end of the SANGHA newsletter.

### 2019 Tsuito Hoyo and December Shotsuki Hoyo Service

Our annual Tsuito Hoyo and December Shotsuki Hoyo Service began at 12 noon on Sunday, December 8. We were very fortunate to have Reverend Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), as our guest speaker. During the service, a special tribute was paid to our departed SBWA members who passed away from November 1, 2018 to October 31, 2019. Seven SBWA members and four ladies from the Betsuin Choir sang "Sen No Kazu ni Natte" during the projection of the late SBWA members' pictures on our monitors. It was a very touching addition to this meaningful service.

We also welcomed our new members: Cynthia Dimand, Keiko Makishima, Lynn Matsuda, Arlene Rojas, Shirley Sekeres and Nicole Yamamoto. We look forward to having them at our many activities during 2020. Thank you to our SBWA Religious Committee for planning the service.

The following SBWA officers were installed with the oath administered by Reverend Marvin Harada:

President:	Barbara Nakatomi
Recording Secretary:	Meriko Hoshida
Treasurers:	Mollie Oto and Irene Takeda
Auditors:	Virginia Uchida and Elaine Yoshikawa
Past President:	Loleen Nakano

By the way, the Corresponding Secretary position is an "appointed position," and I have been asked to stay on under Barbara Nakatomi's term as SBWA President. Therefore, those of you with email addresses will hear from me every month for the next two years on SBWA news.

### 2019 Bonenkai: Report by Fusako Takahashi & Committee

With help from the following, we were able to celebrate our 116th Bonenkai, which was held on Sunday, December 8, 2019:

**Special Guests:** Reverend Kodo Umezu, Bishop of BCA, Reverend Marvin Harada, Reverend Matt Hamasaki.

**Material donations:** Chrysanthemums – Pat Yamamoto; Persimmons – Heidi Sakazaki; Mandarins – Grace Ishimoto; Greenery – Ken, Midori Ito, Helen Sakaishi; Goodies for the tables – Joanie and Don Hamasaki, and Reiko Kurahara; Rei shu (Japanese high-quality sake) – Nancy Hashimoto; Bottled water – Diane Muramoto, Fusako Takahashi.

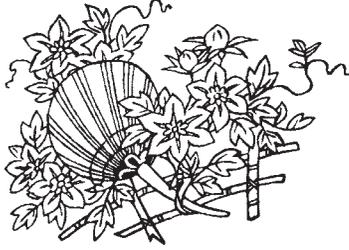
**Committee:** Myra Okasaki, Shirley Kato, Loleen Nakano, Lynn Kurahara, Grace Ishimoto, Jane Komure, Reiko Kurahara, Elaine Yoshikawa, Irene Takeda, Sueko Yamashita, Misa Oshiro, Mollie Oto, Nancy Hashimoto, Beverly Tanaka, Heidi Sakazaki, Pat Yamamoto, Meriko Hoshida, Barbara Nakatomi, Keiko Jean Kashiwada, Mary Ann Kashiwagi, Diane Muranaka, Virginia Uchida, Eva Kawada, Mari Lynn Shimamoto, Marlene Takeoka, and Fusako Takahashi.

**Outside of SBWA:** ABA men (Stephen Kashiwada, John Yoshikawa, Wayne Kurahara); Keith Kato, Roger Ikemoto, Don Hamasaki, Karen Adachi, Boy Scout Troup 50, Cindy Kitade, Kellie Morioka Sato, Jennifer Nitta, Bob Chavez.

**Special Gratitude:** Shukugin – Yamashita Kokusei (Sueko); Entertainment: Merv Maruyama; Obento: Kazoku Teriyaki & More, Roseville.

**Gift donations for the door prizes** (thank you very much for your generosity): 1) Hiroko Tsuda, 2) Eva Kawada, 3) Gladys Irokawa, 4) Jennifer Nitta, 5) Toshiye Kawamura, 6) Gayle M. Kono, 7) Faye Uyemura, 8) Shoko Takegoshi, 9) Patty Yamamoto, 10) Irene Hoshiko, 11) Irene Takeda, 12) Sanaye Imajo, 13) Mitzi Erath, 14) Karen Adachi, 15) Mary Ann Kashiwagi, 16) Kaye Kato, 17) Alice Yagi, 18) Naomi Hamamoto, 19) Ellen Ito, 20) Rose Nakao, 21) Nancy Ito, 22) Amiko Kashiwagi, 23) Teruko Ono, 24) Mary Orite, 25) Lori Itow, 26) Carol Fukumoto, 27) Ann Fukumoto, 28) Nora Dressler, 29) Junko Egi, 30) Sadako Furuike, 31) Sumiye Hamamoto, 32) Sueko Yamashita, 33) Pat Matsumoto, 34) Sumi Morita, 35) Toshie Kobata, 36) Shiyoko Futaba, 37) Mieko Kono, 38) Mae Kaneko, 39) Carol Nishimoto, 40) Yosh Nishimoto, 41) Satsuki Yamamoto, 42) Nancy Noguchi, 43) Teruko Hirakida, 44) Kay Sakamoto, 45) Miyo Omoto, 46) May Shimada, 47) Judy Brewster, 48) Katherine Onuki, 49) Yaeko Tadamaru, 50) Edna Onodera, 51) Sachi Sawada, 52) Ikuko Sakazaki, 53) Elaine Yoshikawa, 54) Gordon Nitta, 55) Amy Ishimoto, 56) Karen Gonzales. **Multiple Gifts:** 1) SBWA, 2) Mollie Oto and Oto's Japan Food 3) Myra Okasaki, 4) Meriko Ishigaki, 5) Teiko Matsuo, 6) Esther Sakata, 7) Heidi Sakazaki, 8) Fusako Takahashi, 9) Elaine Yoshikawa, 10) Loleen Nakano, 11) Meriko Hoshida,

## Sacramento Buddhist Women's Association (Continued)



### Sangha Staff

Editor (English) Cliff Adams  
Editor (Japanese) Katsuko Hirota

### Contributing Reporters

President Stuart Ito  
SBWA Keiko Jean Kashiwada  
Legacy Fund Gordon Nitta  
Sakura Gakuen Masako Thomas  
Dharma School Valerie Fong  
Sports Cmte Alan Wu

## Legacy Endowment Fund Gordon Nitta

おかげさま

12) Grace Ishimoto, 13) Lynn Kurahara, 14) Virginia Uchida, 15) Diane Muranaka, 16) Beverly Tanaka, 17) Mari Lynn Shimamoto, 18) Barbara Nakatomi, 19) Shirley Kato, 20) Joanie and Don Hamasaki, 21) Helen Sakaishi, 22) Keiko Jean Kashiwada, 23) Reiko Kurahara, 24) Teruko (Terri) Matsumura, 25) Nancy Hashimoto, 26) Ruth Hayashi, 27) Misa Oshiro, 28) Sandi Nishio, 29) Jean Ota, 30) Ruth Seo, 31) Jane Komure, 32) Gerry Tsukiji, 33) Alice Kataoka, 34) Keiko Nishimoto, 35) Katsuko Hirota, 36) Marlene Takeoka, 37) Reverend Bob and Reverend Patti Oshita.

Thank you to Loleen Nakano, our out-going President, for her leadership.  
With Deepest Gratitude,  
Fusako Takahashi and the Bonenkai Committee

Note: A special thank you to Merv Maruyama for entertaining us this year. Merv had everyone singing and clapping during his singing of some very popular songs.

It was another fun luncheon and again everyone went home with a prize! Thank you to the SBWA Board members and the ABA men who came out on Saturday to set up and cover the tables and for cleaning up the tables and chairs after the luncheon on Sunday. Thank you to Don and Joanie Hamasaki and Stephen Kashiwada for vacuuming the Kaikan carpet.

Thank you to the members who made Bonenkai donations (listed in the "Donations" section at the end of the SANGHA newsletter.

Thank you, SBWA ladies, for always supporting the SBWA with your generous donations and for participating in our events and projects.

Thank you also to the SBWA ladies who individually "sponsored" an Angel Tree child and purchased gifts on his or her wish list. The SBWA also donated \$200 toward this project so that all of the children can receive holiday gifts.

### Upcoming Events—Save the Date!

- Women of Jodo Shinshu Luncheon and Service: February 9. Lunch at 12 noon with service to follow at 1 p.m.
- Sakura Matsuri: March 15. The SBWA needs a chairperson for the SBWA portion of this event. The SBWA will be selling food items. More details to come.
- Music Circus: Possible dates June 28, "Carousel" and July 26, "Annie."
- Northern California Family Conference/Music Fest: September 12 at the Walnut Grove Buddhist Church.

More information to follow as we approach the event dates.

### Next SBWA Meeting

The next SBWA Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, starting at 5:45 p.m. in the Hondo with a short service by Reverend Matt Hamasaki, followed by the meeting in Classrooms 1 and 4.

Happy New Year!

### Happy New Year 2020

The Legacy Endowment Fund Board (LEFB) thanks all who have made contributions to the Wall of Appreciation and contributions to the LEFB. Your generous contributions are deeply appreciated because they help provide the financial resources we need to further support our efforts to promote the Jodo Shinshu religion. The large and small donations you have made show us not only your dedication to the temple and Jodo Shinshu, but also the trust you have in us to be the guardians of your donations.

This past year as in all the years that the LEFB has existed, the bulk of our financial support from the Betsuin has gone to youth-related activities, youths as individuals of the temple and our youth being involved in Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) activities. We understand that the success of our temple and Jodo Shinshu's future depends greatly on our youth as they grow into adulthood.

### Two of our many upcoming events in 2020:

- **Sunday, January 19: Densho Workshop:** Information on how to collect Japanese American history through oral interviews and how to digitize information gathered.
- **Saturday, June 13: 2020 LEFB Rummage Sale:** LEFB's every-other-year, long-awaited rummage sale.

LEFB's wish for the New Year is that you continue to support our efforts through your donations.

Happy New Year.

## ABA Annual New Year Party



**A**BA's Annual New Year Party will be held on Saturday, January 11, in the Buddhist Church Kaikan. The New Year Party provides an opportunity to ABA members to pay their annual ABA membership dues and to recruit new members.

**Date:** Saturday, January 11, 2020

**Place:** Buddhist Church of Sacramento Kaikan

**Time:** 5:30 p.m Cocktails; 6 p.m. Dinner

**Cost:** ABA Members and Their Families: \$10 Adult; 12 and under FREE

**Non-ABA Members:** \$15

**ABA Membership Dues:** \$10 per family

**Sign-Up Deadline:** Friday, January 3, 2020

Please encourage your friends to join the Adult Buddhist Association (ABA), an affiliated organization of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento. ABA provides a variety of social and service activities throughout the year. You can participate in dance classes, exercise programs, Na Aikane ukulele, Monday morning basketball, Sakura Matsuri, Annual Sacramento Buddhist Church Bazaar, Buddha Dharma lectures and seminars, oldies dances, scholarship/education programs and other Sacramento Buddhist Church programs and activities. ABA membership does not require membership in the church.

In the spirit of the season, ABA would like to give to the Food Pantry of the Associated Students, Inc. at California State University, Sacramento. Unfortunately, many students are finding themselves choosing between basic essentials such as food and basic toiletries and the required costs of tuition, fees and books. If you would like to help to replenish the shelves of the Food Pantry to provide students with basic necessities, please consider bringing a small donation of nonperishable items (for example, canned foods, cereals, crackers, peanut butter, soap, toothpaste, etc.) to the ABA New Year Party. The donations will be delivered to the Food Pantry.

To sign up for the party, please contact Karen Adachi at [karenadachi@aol.com](mailto:karenadachi@aol.com) or (916) 801-3721 (call or text) by Friday, January 3, 2020.

## Sakura Gakuen Adult Class

Masako Thomas



**T**he registration for spring semester in person is January 14 at 7:30 p.m. The first day of the semester is February 3, and the last day is June 8.

Our Introductory Beginner Level 1 class will prepare you to enjoy more during your trip to Japan. Perhaps cherry viewing in the spring or Tokyo Olympics? We will offer beginner to advanced classes, including kanji class at Japanese Language Proficiency Test Level N4.

We offer our church members 20% tuition discount. For details, please check Sakura Gakuen website, <https://sakuragakuen.org>. Contact Mrs. Thomas for adult classes at [Thomas@sakuragakuen.org](mailto:Thomas@sakuragakuen.org).

## Thursday Night Medical Series



Aaron Imura

Former Personal Fitness Trainer  
"2020 Fitness Vision"

## "How to Live a Life Well"

Thursday, January 23, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Classrooms 1 and 4

**J**oin us for this friendly and informative session. Ask questions and learn about steps you can take to ensure a healthy and happy life for yourself and those around you. Please sign up in the temple office (916) 446-0421 or at [BetsuinPrograms@gmail.com](mailto:BetsuinPrograms@gmail.com).

Buddhist Church of Sacramento, 2401 Riverside Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95818-2233

## Sakura Matsuri

3rd Annual Food & Shopping Faire

Sacramento Betsuin

## Sakura Matsuri

3rd Annual Food & Shopping Faire

Sunday, March 15

**S**ave the date! The 3rd Annual Sakura Matsuri Food & Shopping Faire will be held on Sunday, March 15, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Food booths will be open from 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (or until sold out). The Faire will feature a variety of food booths sponsored by various Betsuin-affiliated and -sponsored organizations, as well as commercial products, services, and craft items sold by individual vendors and organizations.

Vendor applications are now being accepted. Please note there are special Early Bird rates and rates for paid members of the church. The Early Bird deadline is January 17. The registration deadline is February 7.

For vendor applications or more information about the vendor/organization booths, please contact Karen Adachi at (916) 801-3721 or [karenadachi@aol.com](mailto:karenadachi@aol.com). Application forms also are posted on the church website, [www.buddhistchurch.org](http://www.buddhistchurch.org), under Special Events.

# Buddhist Education Class

Presented by the  
Buddhist Church of Sacramento

## Tracing Your Japanese Ancestry

Are you interested in tracing your roots back to Japan?  
Do you have Japanese registry documents that you need help interpreting?

You are invited to a presentation by Marty Wolf on how to trace your Japanese roots.

Bring any documents that you need help interpreting



### Tracing Your Japanese Ancestry

January 19, 2020  
11:45 - 1:30 pm  
Main Hondo

Buddhist Church of Sacramento  
2401 Riverside Blvd  
916.446.0121  
[www.buddhistchurch.org](http://www.buddhistchurch.org)

Please join us for an informative session on how to trace your Japanese ancestry presented by Marty Wolf.

Marty Wolf graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Japanese and specializes in locating Japanese family registry documents. Many Japanese Americans do not know much about their ancestors prior to their Issei

generation. The two major obstacles tend to be the Japanese language and general unfamiliarity with relevant documents.

In this session, Marty will help teach you how to research your family history traced back to Japan. Please bring any documents regarding your family origins in Japan.



### Sangha Dance Through the Decades!



Save The Date: February 29, 2020 — "Sangha Dance Through the Decades!" Hosted by the Buddhist Church of Florin. All Sangha members of all ages from the Northern California District temples are invited to stroll down memory lane through dancing and music of various decades or just come to socialize! Fun for all ages!

Where: Buddhist Church of Florin  
7235 Pritchard Road, Sacramento, CA 95828  
When: Saturday, February 29, 2020  
6-7 p.m. Dance Lessons with Mr. Frank Fong  
7-10 p.m. Open Dance Floor with DJ Alan Kobayashi

Please RSVP through the temple office at (916) 383-1831 or <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sangha-dance-through-the-decades-tickets-82927086147>  
This is a free event; however, donations will be kindly accepted at the door.

## Notes from the Office

We encourage all activity organizers and groups at the Sacramento Buddhist Church to submit articles and artwork to each month's SANGHA newsletter.

Please be aware that articles for the SANGHA are **due** on the **15th of each month**. Late articles will be published in the following month's issue.

When sending articles by email, please send email to: **SBCSangha@gmail.com** with a **cc to: betsuinoffice@gmail.com** and inform the church office at (916) 446-0121. Please include the author's name. Thank you.

### Huge Gratitude...

**T**o you for all of the kind messages and delicious Christmas treats received over the holidays! All of us on the Betsuin Office staff are feeling very appreciated and want to send our heartfelt "thank you" right back to the sangha. Hoping all of you enjoyed your holidays and wishing you a wonderful, Happy New Year!

### 2020 Membership Dues Payment

Annual Membership Renewal Forms that were not picked up from the Betsuin hallway were mailed on December 16 to all individuals and families who were paid members in 2019. If you have not received yours, please contact the office so that we can remedy that right away! For our third year, online credit card payment is available for **both monthly and annual options**. To find quick links to the membership categories, you can go to the Betsuin website at [www.buddhistchurch.org/membership](http://www.buddhistchurch.org/membership).

### Annual Giving Reports

For several years, the Betsuin automatically distributed Annual Giving Reports. Initially, reports were sent to all donors; in subsequent years, reports were sent only to members (nonmember donations are acknowledged with individual donation letters).

Each year, we received valuable feedback from you that helped to inform our procedure. In 2018, we learned that while the report is helpful, many of you:

- Track your own donations through your personal banking application
- Donate directly to various Betsuin organizations and events and those contributions are not included in the Annual Giving Report (because each organization or committee tracks its own finances and acknowledgments separately).

**As we did last year for 2018 contributions, your individual Annual Giving Report for donations made in 2019 will be available by request.**

To make a request, please send an email to: [BetsuinGivingReport@gmail.com](mailto:BetsuinGivingReport@gmail.com). You also can call the office at (916) 446-0121, and provide your name and mailing address (including your zip code). Please allow 7 business days from the acknowledgment of your request for processing.

### Angel Tree – Another Very Successful Partnership

The Betsuin's fourth year of partnering with the Salvation Army and Channel 10 was a big success and for that, we again have YOU to thank! Because the sangha's response was so amazing, we were also able to help another local organization with its wish list!

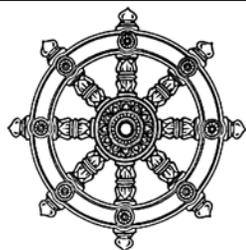
916 Ink is a Sacramento arts-based creative writing nonprofit that provides workshops for Sacramento area youth, grades 3–12. Their goal: to transform students into confident writers and published authors. The program increases literacy skills, improves vocabulary and teaches empathy, positively affecting social and emotional learning, and expanding communication skills. Through your generosity, we were able to provide audio recorders, markers, dividers for journaling binders and LOTS of binder paper! All these resources will be put to good use by the students in their classrooms.

Many, many thanks to Jennifer, Kellie, Mika, Courtney Amioka, and Julie Wu for all the behind-the-scenes effort it takes to make this program a success. MOST ESPECIALLY, thanks to ALL OF YOU for sharing your Christmas spirit to ensure that these children and families had a little extra "merry" in their season!

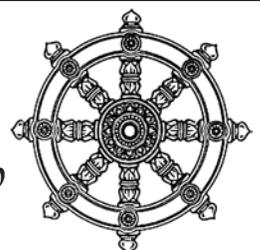
### Betsuin Calendar

#### January Office Holiday Hours

- Wednesday, 1/1/20, 9:30 a.m.: Shusho-E Service and Otoki  
Bring a favorite dish to share and join us in welcoming in the New Year!  
Betsuin Closed after Otoki — Happy New Year!
- Thursday, 1/2/20: Betsuin Closed
- Friday, 1/3/20: Betsuin Closed
- Sunday, 1/5/20: 11:30 a.m.: Shotsuki Hoyo Memorial Service
- Monday, 1/20/20: Betsuin Closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Welcome New Members  
Allen & Lynne Ishimoto  
Miko Kuwabara  
Ron Ohta  
Deanna Simmons  
Bryan & Allison Swann



**2020 Family Memorial Service Schedule**

Traditionally, family memorial services are held for loved ones on designated anniversaries. These are precious occasions to honor the treasured memories of our beloved ones and to realize how fortunate we are to be embraced by Amida Buddha's light of wisdom and life of compassion.

Year of Death	2020 Memorial	Year of Death	2020 Memorial
2019 .....	1 year	1996 .....	25 year
2018 .....	3 year	1988 .....	33 year
2014 .....	7 year	1971 .....	50 year
2008 .....	13 year	1921 .....	100 year
2004 .....	17 year		



*Condolences to  
the Family Of*



*Roy Iseri ..... November 21, 1932 - November 12, 2019*

**Dharma School News**

Valerie Fong,  
Superintendent



**H**appy New Year! Welcome to 2020! We hope that you and your family enjoyed a happy, healthy, and memorable holiday season.

The month of January is typically when Dharma School is putting the final touches on student projects for display during Open House that will follow our Nirvana Day Service on Sunday, February 9. Please join us in the Kaikan to see what we have been doing each Sunday and for light refreshments. With gassho.

**Donations**

Dharma School "courtyard" gratefully acknowledges donations from the following:

Family of Misao Abe

Joanie & Don Hamasaki

Nancy Hashimoto

Grace Hatano

Esther Hokama

Randall Ishida

Keiko Jean Kashiwada

Selina & Aaron Lee

Janet Mizushima

Koji & Keiko Nishimoto

Helen Sakaishi

Heidi Sakazaki

Karen Yamamoto

Yoshimuras

**Boy Scout Troop 50 Annual All-You-Can-Eat Crab Feed**



**Boy Scout Troop 50  
Crab Feed  
2020**

**Crab**

**Salad  
Ice Cream  
50/50**

**Pasta  
Raffle Prizes  
Last Man Standing**

**Saturday, January 18, 2020  
Doors Open at 4:30 p.m.  
Dinner Served at 5:30 p.m.**

**Sacramento Buddhist Church  
2401 Riverside Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95818**

**Tickets: \$60 per person**

For tickets, please contact any Troop 50 Boy Scout or the Sacramento Buddhist Church Office, (916) 446-0121, Amie Ichio at (415) 613-8951, or Cindi Lu at (916) 607-1168.

Thank you in advance for your support!

## Sports Committee

Alan Wu



**Office Manager**  
Cindy Kitade

**Office Project Coordinator**  
Jennifer Nitta

**Front Office Coordinator**  
Mika Matayoshi

**Front Desk Staff**  
Kellie Morioka

**Betsuin Office**  
(916) 446-0121

**Sangha Helpers**  
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Thanks again for stopping by to visit. Let me be the one of the many to wish you all a very happy new year! Welcome to 2020, and we are not just referring to the optimal eyesight diagnosis. We are talking about entering the second decade of the 21st century. The second decade already? It seemed like yesterday we were all scurrying about to prepare for Y2K and the end of the world as we knew it. And after 19 years and looking back, we can see that the world as we knew it did in fact end. As we all know, nothing stays the same, everything is impermanent, and so was 1999, and the 20th century. Yes, things did change with Y2K, but nothing cataclysmic or anything on the Nostradamus level.

So that was about 20 years ago. What do we have to look forward to in January 2020?

The most obvious and visible event to come to mind is the National Fruitcake Toss Day. National Fruitcake Toss Day is always celebrated on January 3rd, and to completely understand this holiday, one must go back to National Fruitcake Day. National Fruitcake Day is always celebrated on December 27th. Did you get a fruitcake for the holidays? Did you give a fruitcake for the holidays? Have you seen a fruitcake recently? They used to be all over the place, but not so much anymore. Maybe I am not looking in the right places?

The fruitcake has always been a mystery. It always shows up as a holiday gift, but no one actually knows how old that fruitcake could be, because the fruitcake defies the aging process. Rumor has it that the fruitcake is passed along from recipient to recipient. Rumor has it that there are no new fruitcakes, only old ones that keep getting passed around and around. The fruitcake seems to be the only acceptable re-gifting gift because no one really eats the fruitcake; they merely pass it along to someone else; however, there must be someone out there who actually likes the fruitcake; and to that one person: Congratulations! You can have mine!

When you examine the recipe, it all appears to be normal, ordinary, run-of-the-mill baking ingredients, but the finished product is by far, far from normal, ordinary and run-of-the-mill. The end product is a brick-like structure that weighs a ton. Maybe but maybe, freshly baked fruitcakes appear to be a normal baked good in every way and that because there have not been any new fruitcakes since the 1940s and 1950s, that's the reason the ones we see today are a dense brick and weigh a ton.

Isn't it puzzling that on one hand, you can take ordinary ingredients and produce something as wonderful as a fruit basket cake, and on the other hand, something like a fruitcake? Perhaps two absolute opposite ends of the spectrum; but I guess that is also true when we all play around with nitro and glycerin. On one hand, you can create a very dangerously explosive product with nitroglycerin while on the other hand, you can create a very successful heart medicine...it is a puzzlement, I tell you.

When the ancient ones decided to make the fruitcake with the dried fruits from this year's harvest, little did they know that they were creating a new holiday tradition; the tradition of the endless loop of passing the fruitcake.

So this is where the National Fruitcake Day holiday comes into play. December 27 every year is the day that you rewrap your fruitcake and give it to someone else. You don't want to be holding the fruitcake on New Year's Day, because then you are responsible for storing that fruitcake until the next holiday season. Rumor has it that this is the origin of the "Hot Potato" game.

So, this is where the National Fruitcake Toss Day holiday gets into the conversation. This holiday is the contrarian's tradition to discontinue the endless loop of the perpetual passing of the fruitcake. This holiday celebrates the tossing of the fruitcake. Always on January 3, the fruitcake is tossed, either tossed away or tossed for distance. So after the holidays and after the fruitcake inventory has been tallied, use January 3 as the day to toss the fruitcake or store it for another year.

Remember: On January 3, toss the fruitcake away or toss it for distance, and never ever toss it at someone; because of its mass and density, it can kill someone! This is another safe and sane holiday! This has been the first public service announcement for 2020.

Speaking of sports, January marks the midpoint of the basketball season, so get prepared for the tournament season.

Have a merry toss and we'll talk again.

