




# RADIANCE

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January/February 2021

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## Happy New Year!

According to the Chinese calendar, this is the Year of the **Metal Ox**, which is the second zodiac sign. This year will likely give rewards, but you must work hard. Stay focused. The **Sixth Star** moves to the middle this year, which denotes late autumn and late evening. The unlucky directions are SE and NW, thus best not to relocate in either direction. Furthermore, from the center of the house, it would be best not to remodel or disrupt the soil in either direction.



## COVID-19 Update

With continued restrictions in place, Kannon Temple will remain closed due to continued safety of followers and social distancing rules. Services will still be broadcasted online on **zoom**. For those interested in participating, please contact the temple at: [kannontemplenv@gmail.com](mailto:kannontemplenv@gmail.com) to obtain meeting ID and password.

We have also created an electronic payment option in addition to check/cash. Please create a **venmo.com** account and send donation to: [@kannontemplenv](https://www.venmo.com/@kannontemplenv). Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## New Year's Day Service

Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, **10:30 a.m.** (Fri)

**Happy New Year!** Come join us **online** for the first service of the New Year! The special prayers you have submitted will be read at that time to bless you for the upcoming year. Rev. Kanai will continue to ready your prayers for seven days. If you have not received the form, please contact the temple or visit the website.

Traditional *O-toso* (medicinal *sake*) will not be served after the service.

Special New Year *ofudas* will be mailed to those who have requested prayers.

## Nichiren Shu News

In the past, many of you have been receiving hard copies of *Nichiren Shu News* paper along with this newsletter. Due to the current pandemic, physical copies cannot be delivered in time as the Japanese Post Office has suspended mail service to various destinations.

In lieu of the physical copy, please direct your attention to: <http://nichiren-shu.org/news/> to download or view the PDF version. Physical copies may resume once the pandemic subsides.

If you have any questions, please contact the temple.

## Safe Driving Blessing

Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>, **10:30 a.m.** (Sun)

We will hold the annual "Safe Driving" Blessing Ceremony on January 17th. Please fill out the enclosed form with all the necessary information and send back to the temple with your donation. Service will be conducted **online** this year.

At the end of the year, please send back only the **paper** amulet and keep the plastic jacket. We will properly dispose during the *Otakiage* Ceremony some time in 2021.

## Happy New Year!

Shoda Douglas Kanai

After a quick start to 2020, things started to slow down and eventually stop. I hope everyone took some time out to slow down and stop as well.

2020 seemed like a promising year, but with the pandemic things moved into a different direction. At first, there was confusion and in certain cases denial of the deadly effects. As time passed, the scientists were able to understand the virus, culminating with the creation of vaccines from several companies. Hopefully by summer 2021, the vaccine would inoculate most everyone and the pandemic lessened.

There is a saying, "It is always darkest before the dawn." Things will get better, even though it may seem that it will not. We may feel that there is no hope, but there always is. We just have to believe.

We can quickly lose hope when things seem bad for us. We tend to question and want a reason for our calamities. Why is this happening to me? Why? Why? Why? As Buddhists, we know that nothing is permanent and things are constantly changing. ⇨

## Hoshimatsuri / Setsubun Service

Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, **10:30 a.m.** (Sun)

*Setsubun* is the eve of spring and also the Lunar New Year's Eve. Those born in the **Year of the Ox** hopefully will be able to toss roasted soy beans to chase out negative beings and cleanse your soul.

Those born under the sign of the **Ox, 2021, 2009, 1997, 1985, 1973, 1961, 1949 and 1937**, please contact the temple since they will wear special *kamishimo* outfit. Non-members are also welcome.

## Sakyamuni Buddha's Nirvana

## Nichiren Shonin's Birthday

Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, **10:30 a.m.** (Sun)

February 15th is when Sakyamuni Buddha entered into Pari-Nirvana. February 16th is Nichiren Shonin's birthday. We are celebrating both occasions to show our appreciation towards them for their unwavering work in teaching the True Dharma, which has now spread all over the world. Let us show our gratitude by chanting the Lotus Sutra and *Odaimoku* together.

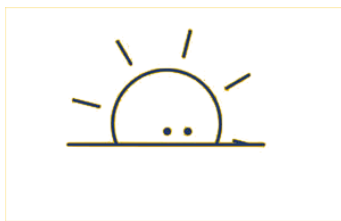
⇐ There are ebbs and flows in our life. Though we may understand this concept, it is difficult to practice and actualize in real time. Visualize in this way: think of yourself as a leaf floating down river. Leaf cannot control which direction to go, but flows where the currents take them. By accepting being a leaf, the river of life will take it where it needs to go. Do not try to be like a stationary rock being battered by the oncoming current. The rock cannot stop the flow of water and only cause more confusion and chaos.

If things are still difficult, think of our temple namesake, Kannon Bodhisattva. Xe (Kannon is both he and she) listens to our concerns and vows to help us. By showing our appreciation and acknowledgement, Kannon Bodhisattva surely will come to the rescue. Add Ch. 25 *gatha* to your daily chanting, either if it is included in your prayer book or read directly from the Lotus Sutra book.

There is a key passage, “All darkness is dispelled by the light of his wisdom, As spotless and as pure as the light of the sun.” The meaning of darkness is both literal and figurative. It is due to our illusions and ignorance that we cannot “see reality as it is.” Our attachments bring forth suffering that blinds us to the truth. Kannon Bodhisattva helps us remove our blinders so that we see once again in light.

We could chant, “Namu Kanzeon Bosatsu,” which is stated in Ch. 25, but even stronger is chanting *Odaimoku* as the seven characters contain all 86, 296 (English) words of the Buddha, including Ch. 25. We are not limited to only one chapter but gain all the benefits from all 28 chapters. So by chanting *Odaimoku* we are in a sense chanting, “Namu Kanzeon Bosatsu” as well.

I always remind myself of “It is always darkest before the dawn.” When there seems like no hope, there is hope. Things will change for the better, just as the sunrise brings forth a new day. Let us all continue to chant the Lotus Sutra and *Odaimoku*, to increase our wisdom so that we can see the world as it truly is, as the Buddha’s Pure Land.



**New Building Fund** commemorating the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Nichiren Shonin’s Birth

**664 shakyo** tracing Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra offered, **23,870,000** times of Chanting *Odaimoku* offered, As of December 26, 2020  
*Thank you very much! Please continue your support.*

*From the High Desert, I Bring you Good News!*

### **Welcome to the First Edition**

Shoda Kanai

*My View Point (As I heard and as I see)* written by Mrs. Kumiko Kanai is on hiatus since she moved to Hawaii. Instead, a new corner has been created for special anecdotes plus periodic guest contributors. If you wish to write something short to share your experience with Buddhism, please contact the temple.

I found this article created from a fellow priest on Facebook. This has been translated from Japanese.

Question (Q): “Where is the Buddha (仏)?”

Answer (A): “*MINAMI*”

Q: “South (南)?” (*minami* means south)

A: “No, *MINA MI* (皆身)” (kanji character for everyone + body=everyone’s body)

A: “Buddha is inside *watashi* (私)” (*watashi* means me or I)

A: “Buddha resides within us”

A: “Buddha resides within the character of ‘me or I’”

*watashi*

*hotoke*



Kanji can be very interesting! They are pictograms so many times images and stories can be derived just by looking deeply at each character. So in this case, we have the Buddha within us when we say “I”!

I have been looking at the character “私” many times, but failed to notice “仏”. My brain is more wired to see the entire character, rather than the parts.

Even though we do not see the Buddha within us, Buddha is always there, just like in the character “*watashi*.” It is when we gain wisdom that we start to “see” our surroundings, especially our very own Buddha-nature. So let us seek out these little mysteries around us.

## EVENTS

(Services will be conducted online until it is safe for everyone to meet again)

<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> (Fri) 10:30 a.m. New Year’s Day <i>Kito</i> Blessing	7 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. <i>Hoshimatsuri</i> / <i>Setsubun</i> Service
3 <sup>rd</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. Monthly <i>Kito</i> Blessing	14 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. Buddha’s Nirvana / St. Nichiren’s Birthday Service
10 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. English Service	21 <sup>st</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. English Service
17 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. Safe Driving <i>Kito</i> Blessing	28 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. <i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)
24 <sup>th</sup> (Sun) 10:30 a.m. <i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)	
31 <sup>st</sup> (Sun) <b>No Service</b>	
<b>5th Sunday</b>	

\*\*\* Join in every Wednesday night at 6 p.m. for **Tea Time with a Priest** to have your questions answered. Email temple for zoom ID and password \*\*\*

\*\*\* Those interested in Study Class and/or Counseling, please contact the temple to make arrangements \*\*\*