



RADIANCE

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March/April 2022

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SACRED WORDS

His (Buddha Sakyamuni's) attainment of Buddhahood are altogether contained in the five words of Myō, Hō, Ren, Ge, Kyō and that consequently, when we uphold the five words, the merits which He accumulated before and after His attainment of Buddhahood are naturally transferred to us.

Nichiren Shonin—*Kanjin Honzon Shō*

COVID-19 Update

Good News! The State of Nevada is gradually lifting restrictions, therefore Kannon Temple will open for in-person service. We request that everyone gets vaccinated, wear a mask, bring their own DHARMA book, and social distance as much as possible. There will be no meal after service so please do not bring anything. Services will still be broadcasted online via **Zoom**. For those interested in participating, please contact the temple to obtain meeting ID and password. Donations can be made through **Zellepay.com** to: kannontemplenv@gmail.com.

Spring Higan Memorial Service Mar. 20th, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

Higan means the “other shore” (Buddha Land) while *Shigan* means “this shore” (worldly land of the material). The world we can see is “this shore” while the “other shore” is the spiritual realm that we can see only through our faith. *Higan* Memorial Service is held to show our appreciation to those in the “other shore” by offering our chanting so that our ancestors can attain Buddhahood.

Please write your name and family names of your ancestors or their individual names on the enclosed prayer form and return to Kannon Temple of Nevada with your donation. Let us chant the sutra and *Odaimoku* together for them.

Buddha's Birthday Celebration Blessing New Born Babies Apr. 3rd, 10:30 a.m. (Sun)

Happy Birthday Sakyamuni Buddha!

According to legend, the baby Buddha, soon after his birth, stood firmly, and walked seven steps and proclaimed, “From heaven to the earth, I alone am the most honored One!” by pointing his right index finger to heaven and his left index finger to the earth. This means the Buddha is the only person who has attained such precepts, meditation and good roots of virtue. It also means there is no person just like you in this world who have the same appearance, character, and karma. Therefore, you are the most honored one as well as any other person.

This year, I will pour the sweet tea in honor of his birth for everyone.

Newborn babies will receive Shoda Kanai Shonin's blessing and special amulets. Please let him know the name of any new born baby ahead of time.

Electronic Newsletter

If you wish to receive this bi-monthly newsletter electronically, please email temple with your request at kannontemplenv@gmail.com. We are in the process of moving many processes online, which will help reduce temple expense. If you have any questions, please contact the temple.

Monthly Amulets ~ Still Available ~

There is still time to receive the special monthly Kannon Temple amulets. Donation will remaining the same at \$5 per month per amulet or \$60 per year per amulet. Please contact the temple either by mail or email with your name and number of requested amulet(s). Donations can be made via check, Zelle, or PayPal.

Hina Matsuri

March 3rd is *Hina Matsuri* or Girl's Day. This is the time to display special dolls representing the Imperial Court and coming of spring. I may create a small display at the temple.



Stress Relief Chanting Meditation

Shoda Kanai

There are many stresses that affect our daily lives, from things we can control to things we cannot. Being “stressed out” is not healthy for the heart and mind. We can cause ourselves to get sick. To remedy this situation, there are many tools available to us such as meditation, yoga, and exercise that we can incorporate into our daily lives. Find something that fits into your schedule and lifestyle.

I also would recommend adding our *Shodaigyo* practice. This is our sect's form of meditative practice. It combines both chanting and quiet contemplation. This is simple to do, and anyone can try, no matter how old or at which chanting level.

Shodaigyo traditionally starts off with quiet meditation followed by chanting of the *Odaimoku* with the chanting starting off slowly then rapidly gaining speed, then finally slowing down. *Shodaigyo*



ends with several minutes of quiet contemplation. At Kannon Temple, we usually schedule *Shodaigyo* on the last Sunday of each month. I recommend everyone join in.

A key point to remember is to focus on your breathing while you chant. When we chant fast, breathing intake is shorter but try focusing on taking in longer breaths, just like how you do when sitting in quiet meditation. Breath in through your nose, hold for three seconds, then exhale. While exhaling, chant *Odaimoku*. Then take another breath and repeat. When not actively saying *Odaimoku*, chant in your mind. That way there is a continuous flow of chanting without any breaks. In this manner, you can gain the most benefit of both active and passive chanting.

Try to also keep your mind free of thoughts and solely focus on the seven characters, *Na, Mu, Myō, Hō, Ren Ge, Kyō*. Do not add in other prayers or wishes to your chanting. This will only serve as a distraction making it harder to establish a connection to our inner Buddha. It is just like trying to tune into an AM radio station, but the channel is not quite clear yet. The staticky noise is the other thoughts interfering with our reception. When our mind is clear, we can hear and connect to the channel (our inner Buddha) perfectly.

As we continue to practice, we accumulate benefits through chanting the *Odaimoku*. Since everyone has Buddha nature, when we chant, we are reattaching ourselves to our inner Buddha. Our hectic life loosens the connection with our inner Buddha, leading ourselves to be out of balance. When we align properly within ourselves, we bring forth a sense of calmness and serenity, just like being a Buddha. The stresses of the world melt away. Notice how you feel next time after chanting. I am sure that you will be pleasantly surprised!

There are many styles and forms of *Shodaigyo*. Each type has different benefits and profound meaning. I may introduce a different style each month so that you can experience first hand. Find one that fits your needs and incorporate that into your daily practice.

New Building Fund commemorating the 800th Anniversary of Nichiren Shonin's Birth

724 shakyo tracing Chapter 25 of the Lotus Sutra offered, **24,240,000** times of Chanting *Odaimoku* offered, As of February 26, 2022

Thank you very much! Please continue your support.

From the High Desert, I Bring you Good News!

Maneki Neko (Lucky Cat)

Shoda Kanai

I am sure that many of you are familiar with *Maneki Neko* commonly referred to as "Lucky Cat." Actually, *Maneki Neko* means "beckoning cat." Many businesses, stores, and restaurants have this figurine placed by the entrance, with the cat facing outwards. At Kannon Temple we too carry on this tradition and have our own cat by the door.

From ancient times, cats were considered holding mystical and magical properties. It is said that it was not until the late Edo Period in Japan that *Maneki Neko* was created. If you look closely, the cat is holding a gold coin, has a bib and collar with a bell. During Edo Period, many of the upper class dressed their cats with a bib and bell so they can find their cat quickly.

Color of *Maneki Neko* varies from white, calico, gold, black, green, and red with each representing different types of fortune. The calico version is considered the most luckiest.

If you see one with the left paw raised, then this symbolizes welcoming of customers. If the right paw is raised, then this symbolizes money to come in. There may be some figurines with both paws raised to bring in both customers and money! Paws are bent forward as this the symbol of "beckoning" in Japan. The cat is not "waving" at you.

You do not have to be a business to have *Maneki Neko* decoration. You can have either style in your home. They are cute and fun to have around. A word of caution, to bring the best luck, it is best to place one close and facing the front door.

Enjoy collecting your figurines and make sure to look for the one decorated at Kannon Temple!



*** Update ***

In the last newsletter I talked about *Hoshigaki* (dried persimmon). Well, unfortunately after a couple of months, I could not get the skin to turn white. It turned very hard and not pliable. I will have to try again later this year.

EVENTS

<u>March</u>		<u>April</u>	
6 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly Kito Blessing	3 rd (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Hanamatsuri</i> (Buddha's Birthday)
13 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	English Service	10 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	Monthly Kito Blessing
20 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Ohigan</i> Memorial Service	17 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	English Service
27 th (Sun) 10:30 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)	24 th (Sun) 10:00 a.m.	<i>Shodai-gyo</i> (Chanting Meditation)

*** 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 ***