



DELTA DHARMA

The Walnut Grove Buddhist Church Newsletter

September 2025

Calendar of Services, Meetings & Events

Tuesday 2 7:00 PM Board Meeting (Hybrid)

Sunday 7 1:30 PM Shotsuki/Monthly Service

Sunday 21 8:00 AM Fall Clean-Up

Sunday 28 10:00 AM Bob Matsueda Yoga & Buddhism Workshop (see flyer enclosed)

Contact info

Located at 14105 Pine Street 95690

Mail us at PO Box 336

Our email is

walnutgrovebuddhistchurch@gmail.com

The website is still under remodel

walnutgrovebc.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

July is always one of our busiest months. We kicked off with our annual Bento Fundraiser and once again it was a huge success. We completely sold out! Thanks to our Fundraiser Leadership team and our faithful volunteers, everything went well. During a time when church membership has decreased across all religions in the country, I still marvel that our little country temple enjoys the connections with families that have historically been part of the church, as well as new friends and members. A call for help goes out and many respond with big smiles and a readiness to work. Thank you to everyone! We couldn't do this without all of you.

Two weeks later we donned our kimonos and hapis to celebrate Obon. The Obon Odori happened on a perfect evening. The Delta breeze kept the evening very comfortable, and the turnout of people was tremendous. As I watched our circle get larger and larger, there was a brief flashback to the Obon of my childhood. The back parking lot was full, lanterns shined brightly and there was a huge circle of dancers. It was always a very special evening. And this evening was equally as special! Our thanks to our dance instructors Sandi Kawamura, Yvonne Ishimoto and Karen Adachi; and to Janet Sakata who stepped in for Craig Nakahara as the MC. I also want to acknowledge our set up crew of Craig Nakahara, Tom Shinmoto and Dave Ito and our snack preparers Sandi Kawamura, Holly Pauls and Tom Cappaletti. And yes, the rumors are true, our snack bags and drinks are free!

In September we will reconvene from our month off and we have a special event sponsored by the BCA Temples of the Northern District. Please join us at the **Yoga and Buddhism Community Gathering** on September 26-28, 2025 at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Sacramento. There will be interesting workshops, lively discussions and of course, yummy food. All are welcome no matter your age or physical condition. So please register as soon as you can, as spaces are limited. Please see the flyer in this newsletter for more information.

Please enjoy the rest of your summer. In Gassho, Sharon Yokoi, Co-President

Remember the Fundraiser?

It seems so long ago already! Early numbers indicate a financial success, making a little more each year since we started this new version of the old bazaar fundraiser. While we all miss the 2 day full bazaar that went on for 66 years, we have made the best of our changing sangha demographics. This format has allowed us to produce a very fine product for which we can be proud, and the opportunity for fellowship with our temple members and friends as we prepare our delicious bento and chicken teriyaki. Please enjoy these photos of our wonderful volunteers, and what we made.



Obon: The Spirit of Coming Home

The season of Obon and the Obon service always reminds me of going home. My summers growing up in Stockton were filled with Obon odori practices, which then led to the temple's annual Obon service, odori, and bazaar. When I went away to college and even when I began serving as a minister in the Buddhist Churches of America almost 10 years ago, being able to come back to Stockton during the summer for Obon was pretty magical.

I use the word magical to describe this feeling because it was like I traveled back in time. I remembered the same feelings I felt, such as excitement, happiness, comfort, and joy, that I experienced when I was a young girl. Of course, the smell and taste of Stockton's bazaar foods like curry rice, chicken teriyaki, sweet corn on the cob, maki and inari sushi, chicken salad, and Stockton's favorite hamburgers, unlock core memories of my childhood as well.

Some of you reading this may have traveled home for the Obon service, bazaar and odori. Returning to the temple often feels like a reunion. We see and sit in the temple, walk the same halls, smell the familiar incense. Memories return of sitting next to our parents as children during services, playing basketball in the gym, friendships made with Dharma School children, or dancing during the Obon odori under the warm evening sky years ago.

That sense of home is powerful. But it also raises a deeper question: what is *home*, really? Is it a building? A town? A family? Or is it something deeper—a feeling, a place in the heart where we feel known, where we feel at peace, where we are accepted just as we are? That, I believe, is the true spirit of Obon. We're not just returning to a *place*—we're returning to a truth that's always been waiting for us. A truth beyond life and death. A truth that says: you are not alone. You are not forgotten. You are embraced, just as you are, in boundless compassion. That is the home Amida Buddha offers us.

In Jōdo Shinshū, we recite *Namu Amida Butsu*. For those who grew up in the temple, it is something we have heard since childhood. We say it during services. We may say it when we feel afraid, when we remember someone we love, or even just out of habit. But what does it really mean? "Namu Amida Butsu" means "I entrust myself to Amida Buddha." But even deeper, it means, I awaken to the truth that I am embraced, just as I am. Amida's Vow is to bring all beings—no exceptions—into the Pure Land of Enlightenment.

During Obon, as we remember those who have gone before us, we also remember that they, too, are embraced in that same light. And they call to us—not in words, but in feeling. In memory. In the deep, inexplicable longing we sometimes feel for something beyond this world. When we feel the presence of loved ones who have passed, we feel something sacred. When we remember their kindness, their sacrifices, even their imperfections—we begin to understand the Nembutsu path. It is a path of deep human feeling. It is a path of being touched by something far beyond our ego.

And in that gratitude, we begin to let go of our self-centered struggles. We begin to live more gently, more freely and we begin to come home to the truth of the Nembutsu.

In Gassho,
Rev. Candice Shibata

Obon 2025

Preparations were underway early on Saturday July 19 for the annual Obon Odori celebration. Lanterns were strung from ropes crisscrossing the large lawn area. A perfect circle was painted to help guide the dancers in unison. Chairs were lined up for the audience. The snack bags were assembled with the traditional nigiri (rice balls) and sliced takuan (pickled radish). The weather cooperated with mild temps and a slight breeze.

Apparently, the word got out that Walnut Grove is the place to be for Obon odori this year. There were over 70 participants and many viewers in the audience. It was the largest gathering for odori in a long time. Families came from as far as Penryn, Sacramento and the foothills. It was a reunion for many as friends reconnected and enjoyed the festivities.

None of this would have been as successful if it wasn't for the wonderful volunteers. We'd like to thank Craig Nakahara and Tom Shinmoto for general set-up and the sound system. Other helpful workers include Dave Ito, Virgil Norman and Steve Hori. Janet Sakata did a fine job as MC. Sandi Kawamura and her cousins Karen Adachi and Yvonne Ishimoto lead the dances, Carol Tang, Sandi, Tom Cappelletti and Holly Pauls prepared the mini bento snack bags. Sandi also provided a detailed handout of the dances which especially helped the newcomers learn the meaning of the songs.

All in all, it was an enjoyable evening to remember our ancestors and friends who contributed so much to our lives.



September Shotsuki

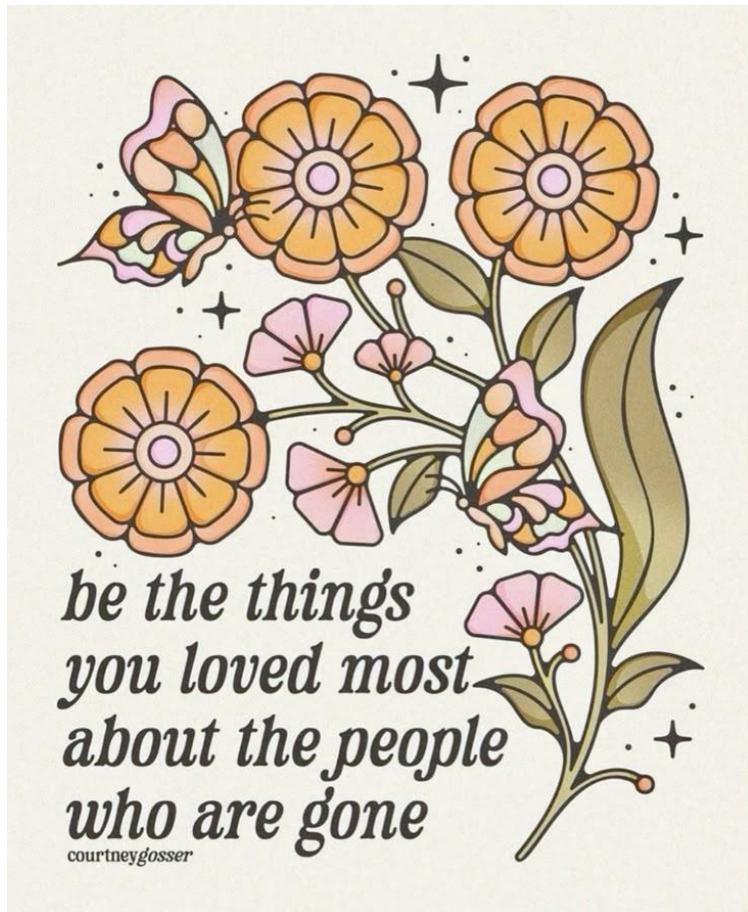
Deceased

Misayo
 Itsuji
 Kazuko
 Emi
 Shingo
 Rev. Seikaku
 Teruko
 Minoru
 Hatsu
 Kane
 Shizu
 Aiko
 Hideo
 Howard
 Nancy
 Sadako

Chief Mourner

Shinmoto	Thomas	Shinmoto
Shinmoto	Thomas	Shinmoto
Ogawa	Kenneth	Sano
Nakagami	Kenneth	Sano
Ohta	June	Okada
Mizutani	Lillian	Matsuoka
Kondo	Lillian	Matsuoka
Hori	Steve	Hori
Okamoto		
Ahara	Nancy	Nakahara
Goto	Mineko	Kawamura
Takaki		
Oto	Sally Oto	Opgenorth
Mizutani	Lillian	Matsuoka
Tokuyoshi		
Kawahara		

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The Walnut Grove Buddhist Church Gratefully Acknowledges

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Following Donations



SHOTSUKI

Sally Oto Opgenorth	
IMO Hideo & Sakiko Oto	100.00
John Matsumoto	
IMO Wesley Matsumoto	50.00
Craig Nakahara	
IMO Misayo Nakahara	50.00
Frances Nakahara	
IMO Misayo Nakahara	50.00
June Okada	
IMO Sadako Okada	50.00
June Okada	
IMO Harry Okada	100.00
Tracy Nagao	
IMO Tomo Kumura	50.00
Fred Nagao	
IMO Tomo Kumura	50.00
Linda Kawahara-Matsuo	50.00
Mitsuko Norikane	30.00
Joyce Sakai	
IMO Grace Sakai	100.00
Carol Tang	100.00

IMO Masae Nakayama

Sandy Kawamura	25.00
Gary/Yvonne Ishimoto	25.00
Keith/Karen Adachi	25.00
Emiko Ishimoto	25.00
Stephen/Keiko K	25.00
Ron/Ellen Ishimoto	25.00

SPECIAL DONATIONS

Anonymous	1000.00
Clipper Spa	100.00
June Matsubara/Keiro	100.00
Virgil Norman/New Year	100.00
Virgil Norman	100.00
Kent Hirose Family	300.00
Marilyn Jarboe/Newsletter	25.00
Lillian Matsuoka	1000.00

OBON

Sally Opgenorth	50.00
Priscilla Ito	25.00
Virginia Uchida	50.00
James/Janet Kashiwada	100.00
Carol Tang	100.00
Frances Nakahara	50.00
Craig Nakahara	50.00
Holly Pauls	50.00
Dorothy Koga	10.00
Jean Yokotobi	30.00
Shoji Oda	50.00
Lindley/Janice Toyama	25.00
Dorothy Tokuyoshi	50.00
June Okada	25.00
Steve Hori	30.00
Darrell Yoshimi	50.00
Lorriane Mizuno	100.00
John/Elaine Yoshikawa	50.00
Myra/Dean Okasaki	100.00
Janet Sakata	100.00
Stephen/Keiko Kashiwada	50.00
Karen/Keith Adachi	50.00
Gary/Yvonne Ishimoto	50.00
Ron/Ellen Ishimoto	50.00
Yuri Yokoi	25.00
Gerry Shelton/Sharon Yokoi	50.00
Thomas Shinmoto	50.00
Patricia Nishite	100.00
Steve/Donna Hiromoto	100.00
John Matsumoto	50.00
Mistsuko Norikane	30.00
Wendy Bartlett	50.00
June Matsubara	100.00
Sharon/Ken Sano	50.00
Charlene Hamada Krug	40.00
Steve Sakai	100.00

HATSUBON

Tom Cappelletti	
IMO Helen Frances Capalety	50.00
Sandra Kawamura	
IMO Shiro Kawamura	100.00

YOGA AND BUDDHISM COMMUNITY GATHERING

*Workshops and discussions on Yoga and Buddhism Friday,
Sept. 26 - Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025 Hard Rock Hotel & Casino,
Sacramento*



Bob Matsueda
Yoga and Wellness
Instructor, Yoga Therapist,
Government of India,
Ministry of AYUSH



Rev. Bob Oshita & Rev. Patti Oshita
BCA Ministers (Retired)
Co-authors, *Dharma Is Everywhere*



Rev. Yuki Sugahara
Rimban,
Buddhist Church of
Sacramento
& Northern District

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED

Information and sign up, please email Rev. Patti Oshita
pattioshita100@gmail.com

**Sponsored by: Buddhist Church of Florin • Buddhist
Church of Marysville Placer Buddhist Church • Buddhist
Church of Sacramento • Buddhist Church of Stockton
Walnut Grove Buddhist Church • Buddhist Church of Lodi**

Buddhist Churches of America



Center for Buddhist Education

BCA Endowment Foundation's Dharma Forward Program

*** We are not endorsing gambling, but we appreciate



Rev. Noritaka Imada
Minister,
Buddhist Church of
Florin & Buddhist
Church of Lodi

We are not endorsing gambling,
but we appreciate the venue for the
accommodations for this event.



WALNUT GROVE BUDDHIST CHURCH

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WALNUT GROVE CA 95690