



# THE DELTA DHARMA

WGBC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## FEBRUARY 2026

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### CALENDAR OF SERVICES, MEETINGS, AND EVENTS

**Sunday 1 12:00 PM Fundraiser Meeting**  
**Sunday 1 1:30 PM Shotsuki/Monthly Service**  
**Sunday 22 10:00 AM Adult Study**

NO BOARD MEETING IN FEBRUARY

### ADULT STUDY IN JANUARY

Last Sunday Rev Shibata made the challenging trek through the fog to conduct our monthly Adult Study in Walnut Grove. We began the session with a recorded 10-minute meditation to help calm our minds and bring us into the present. A short service followed to include the chanting of Sanbutsuge or "Praises of the Buddha". This is the first Gatha of the Larger Sutra and expresses the desire by Dharmakara Bodhisattva to attain Buddhahood.

Following the service, we discussed current affairs with a deliberate intention to avoid politics but acknowledging the current suffering and injustice in the world. People were able to express their feelings and understand that kindness and compassion are the best tools for coping with current affairs. To combat feelings of helplessness and isolation we talked about enjoying nature and making connections with others. Our sangha is small but friendly and very approachable. As the session ended the sun came out and we made our way to the Gakuen to join the others for a delicious New Years luncheon. Many thanks to all who helped make this day so special. In Gassho, Holly Pauls



### 2026 WAS OFFICIALLY CELEBRATED AT OUR ANNUAL NEW YEAR LUNCHEON PARTY.

We had close to 40 attendees, including 4 new members, and we all enjoyed a delicious buffet catered by Pineapple Restaurant of Isleton. We had our raffle/gift exchange, and everyone got something special. We thank the volunteers for their time organizing and setting up for the event, those who brought desserts, fruit salad, and beverages, and of course our attendees and the gifts they brought to share.

And thanks Craig for supplying the emergency heat!



## THE WEIGHT OF THE ROBES

As the minister at the Buddhist Church of Stockton and the supervising minister of the Walnut Grove Buddhist Church for the past five and a half years, you would assume that I would have a handle of my schedule and the timing of getting from one temple to another. This is especially important on the first Sunday of the month since I conduct services at both temples that day. Despite knowing this day's schedule of events and what I need for them, I recently found myself falling short and feeling the "weight of my robes."

Sunday, December 7, 2025 was especially busy with Stockton's Sunday Dharma Service at 10:00 AM, Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service at 10:30 AM, and the Stockton Buddhist Women's Association appreciation luncheon at 11:30 AM. This was followed by Walnut Grove Buddhist Church's Combined Regular and Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service at 1:30 PM. I am trying to be more mindful and realistic of how much time it takes me to pack up my belongings, walk to the car, say goodbye to the temple cats, and drive the 30 minutes to Walnut Grove so I can arrive before 1:00 PM and have ample time to set up and prepare for service. On this particular Sunday, mindfulness quickly turned to absentmindedness and realistic turned into an unrealistic arrival time.

As I finally arrived in Walnut Grove, I parked and went to my trunk where I usually keep my travel bag for religious emergencies that contains my robes, *wagesa* (loop shaped stole worn around the neck), *onenju* (mindfulness beads), chanting books, handheld bell, and image of Amida Buddha. To my surprise, my trunk was empty! I quickly had a flashback of removing it from my trunk just a few days earlier to conduct the online service for the Cortez Howakai on Thursday evening. My travel bag was still sitting in my home office and one of my ministerial nightmares came true...I forgot my robes!

I was mortified, but knew that I did not have enough time to go home. As I entered the backdoor of the Walnut Grove Buddhist Church, I was kindly welcomed by a few members who were setting up. My head and shoulders felt weighed down as I confessed that I had forgotten my robes. Embarrassment filled my body, especially in my cheeks as I felt them flush bright red. My members tried to reassure me multiple times that it was okay, things happen, and that I was human too.

I continued to feel the weight of my robes, or actually, the weight of their absence. I felt embarrassed and unprofessional as I set up the altar. Because my forgetfulness made me feel that I was not worthy of sitting on the altar, I decided to conduct the service from the lower podium and I sat in the first pew to conduct the service. As I read the list of monthly memorial names, I felt like I had dishonored them and their families. I tried to share my Dharma message with sincerity, but all I could think about was my failure and unprofessionalism as a minister.

During this past month I had time to reflect upon improving my time management and productivity skills and the incident of forgetting my robes. I also thought about Shinran Shonin and despite living such a long time ago, the humanness that he exhibited that translates to my struggles today. I am humbly grateful for Shinran Shonin's statement, "I am neither monk nor layman." This statement is a self-expression of his identity as a husband, a father, and the humility and gratitude of being a follower of the Nembutsu. Following his exile, Shinran Shonin took on the name Gutoku, which means "foolish, bald-headed one." I think this name also reveals his awareness of his own human nature.

In the end, forgetting my robes became more than a moment of embarrassment. It became a quiet Dharma lesson. It reminded me that the robes do not make the minister, just as the absence of them does not erase the Nembutsu or the compassion that holds us all. Like Shinran Shonin, I am continually made aware of my own limitations, forgetfulness, and foolishness, and yet I am also continually embraced by boundless compassion just as I am. I am deeply grateful to the members who met my humanness with kindness and understanding, and for the Dharma that gently reminds me that even in moments of perceived failure, we are never outside the grasp of Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion.

In Gassho,            Rev. Candice Shibata

# February Shotsuki

## Joyous Monthly Memorial

### Deceased

Bunroku	Yoshimi
Kitaro	Matsumoto
Kunisaburo	Ishizuka
Takao	Sugimoto
Shizu	Sakai
Jyohichi	Sakai
Moheiji	Sakai
Jun	Nagoshi
Teruko	Mizutani
Yuishin	Kondo
Kiyomi	Okada
Setsu	Hirakawa
Suenari	Koga
Suemi	Shimazaki
Sotaro	Iguchi
Asakichi	Koyanagi
Hanjiro	Heisen
Nami	Ike
Yoshio	Ikeuchi
Kimito	Kimura
Gohei	Yasumori
Minoru	Takaki
Atsumu	Ohara
Toshio Ray	Matsubara
Robert	Pauls
Gladys	Katsuki
Edwin	Mizutani
Alyce Marie	Takaki
Venera	Soliven
Sumiko	Oda
Hiroko	Sugimoto

### Chief Mourner

Darrell	Yoshimi
Vickie	Ong
Joanne	Ishizuka
Hiroko	Sugimoto
Naomi	Sakai
Naomi	Sakai
Naomi	Sakai
Shizue	Nagoshi
Lillian	Matsuoka
Lillian	Matsuoka
June	Okada
Dorothy	Koga
Dorothy	Koga
Gary	Hirotsu
Gary	Hirotsu
Gary	Hirotsu
Wayne	Ikeuchi
Betty	Kimura
Mitsuko	Norikane
Sandy	Fujii
Shigeru	Ohara
June	Matsubara
Holly	Pauls
Linda	Katsuki
Lillian	Matsuoka
Sandy	Fujii
Linda	Soliven
Shoji	Oda
Pearl	Sugimoto

### BEREAVEMENT

It is with deep condolences to his family and friends, we sadly announce the passing of member Shoji Oda. Although Shoji lived out of town, we were always happy to see him when he was able to come for services. His quiet manner and ready smile will be missed.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to problems with the financial applications used to keep our books, the donations list was not available. We apologize for any inconvenience, and if necessary contact the church if more information is needed.