



Buddhist Church of Sacramento

Guide to

Dharma School Services

Welcome to the Buddhist Church of Sacramento. We are pleased to have you join us for service this morning and hope you will enjoy the experience. If this is your first time here, we hope this brief handout will give you an idea of what to expect from today's service.

Kansho

The Kansho (calling bell) signals to the Sangha (congregation) that service is about to begin.

Quiet Meditation

As the Kansho sounds, the Hondo (main hall) becomes silent as the Sangha spends a few moments sitting quietly in Gassho (palms pressed together). The recitation of the Nembutsu (Namo Amida Butsu) closes the meditation.

Welcome and Opening Meditation

The chairperson begins the service with an opening meditation. As the opening meditation is being read, the Sangha sits quietly in Gassho. The opening meditation concludes with the recitation of the Nembutsu (Namo Amida Butsu).

Opening Gatha

The chairperson will ask the Sangha to stand to sing a gatha (song) from the purple service book.

Three Treasures

During the service, the Minister invites the Sangha to stand and recite the Three Treasures. The Three Treasures can be found on page 3 in the purple service book.

Sutra Chanting

Lead by the Minister, the Sangha will chant one of the following sutras: **Junirai**, **Juseige**, or **Sanbutsuge**. During the time of the historical Shakyamuni Buddha, over 2,500 years ago, teachings were passed on by oral tradition. The practice of chanting continues today; however, it is considered an active form of meditation.

Oshoko

Representatives from the Sangha are called upon to offer incense (Oshoko). Oshoko symbolically represents purifying one's heart and mind to fully listen to the Dharma message.

Golden Chain

The Minister invites the Sangha to stand and recite the Golden Chain. The Golden Chain can be found on page 5 in the purple service book.

Dharma Message

The speaker shares a Dharma message with the Sangha. The Dharma is Universal Truth. It is not to be believed, but to be challenged and tested by each and every one of us.

Closing Gathas

The chairperson will ask the Sangha to stand to sing the closing gathas (songs) from the purple service book.

Closing Meditation

The chairperson reads a closing meditation. As the closing meditation is being read, the Sangha sits quietly in Gassho.

Announcements

Announcements and reminders of upcoming events are made by various temple-affiliated groups.

Oshoko

The chairperson closes the service and invites the Sangha to offer incense.

The Dharma School Classes:

Immediately following service, the Buddhist Church of Sacramento offers classes for students from the pre-school age through High school age students. The Dharma School Term runs from the second Sunday of September to the second Sunday of June.

From the third week of June to the first week of August, we will continue to have Sangha Services at 9:30 am each Sunday morning.

Adult Dharma Sessions:

On the first and third Sundays of almost every month, Dharma sessions are held in the Hondo (main hall) immediately following service. These sessions offer a great opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the teachings in an informal, relaxed setting.

We especially invite those who are new to Buddhism and students.

Membership:

The Buddhist Church of Sacramento was founded in 1899. We have been able to sustain the temple over the decades due to the support of its members. Join now and become a part of this remarkable tradition. Membership forms are available in the main office.

Donations:

Donations are always accepted by visitors and members. Please leave donations with the office staff. Donations can also be placed in the black wooden donation box (Osaisen bako) behind the last row of pews at the front entrance to the Temple.

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