



WELCOMING REVEREND JISHIN MICHON TO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA KOYASAN TEMPLE

Trent Sunahara



On behalf of the Northern California Koyasan Temple, it is my great pleasure to welcome Reverend Nathan Jishin Michon as the new head priest of our Temple.

Reverend Jishin will lead his first service for our congregation on Sunday, September 27, at 1:30 p.m. I hope our members, families, friends, and supporters will join us as we welcome him and begin this important new chapter in the life of our Temple.

For those who have not yet had the opportunity to meet Reverend Jishin, he brings with him an extraordinary combination of traditional Buddhist training, scholarship, spiritual care, and lived experience. Reverend Jishin is a priest in the Kōyasan Shingon Buddhist tradition, the lineage founded in Japan by Kōbō Daishi Kūkai more than 1,200 years ago. His path has taken him through years of Buddhist study and practice in Japan and elsewhere, including extensive work in meditation, Buddhist chaplaincy, interfaith spiritual care, and the application of Buddhist teachings to some of the most difficult moments people face in their lives. His work has included caring for people experiencing grief, illness, disaster, and loss. Following the devastating 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami in Japan, he became deeply involved in the study and practice of Buddhist crisis care and chaplaincy. His academic work has explored the development of Buddhist chaplaincy in contemporary Japan and the ways Buddhist priests can provide compassionate spiritual presence to people regardless of their religious background. He is also an author, editor, translator, educator, and scholar whose work has helped introduce English-speaking audiences to Buddhist approaches to caregiving, spiritual care, meditation, and community service.

But there is another part of Reverend Jishin's story that makes his arrival at Northern California Koyasan particularly meaningful. One of his principal Shingon teachers is Reverend Seichō Asahi, who served our own Northern California Koyasan Temple for many years before returning to Japan. Reverend Jishin has continued to study with Asahi Sensei at Risō-in Temple in Hiroshima Prefecture, learning and assisting with Shingon chanting, ceremonies, rituals, and temple life. In that sense, Reverend Jishin's arrival is not simply the beginning of something new. It is also the continuation of a relationship and a spiritual lineage that has long connected our Sacramento temple with Kōyasan and with generations of Shingon teachers in Japan. That continuity is important.

Japanese American nisei's built this community, maintained its ceremonies, supported its ministers, cared for one another, and preserved our traditions since their time in the camps, and later to the temples on the Sunahara and Yamamoto family properties. Today, our responsibility is both to protect that inheritance and to ensure that it continues to live.



TORONAGASHI 2026

Liz Yokoyama

On August 15th the Temple held its annual Toronagashi (Floating Lantern) service and picnic at William Land Regional Park's - Ann Rudin Peace Pond. Toronagashi is a festival that honors one's ancestors and holds deep spiritual and historical significance for the Buddhist community. It is a time of reflection and remembrance for our ancestors and for those we have loved and hold dear. We wish them peace with reverence and gratitude in our hearts.

Hand-crafted lanterns are artfully created and decorated by each participant. The lanterns are then assembled with a lit candle to illuminate them prior to floating the lanterns down the pond. The floating lantern ceremony symbolizes the guiding of our ancestor's spirits as they return to the Buddha's world.



This year's Toronagashi event was a huge success with the largest number of participants we've had since the pandemic. It was a gathering of friends, family and the larger community. We were treated to great food, comradery; and entertainment to include traditional Obon dancing and a special performance by our talented Koyasan Taiko drummers. Many thanks to all who participated and helped to make this annual event a huge "success." Special thanks to Kaori and Dave Sakauye and the Taiko Group for the wonderful Taiko performance; Claire Yee and the Sakura Minyo Doo Kai for leading us in the obon odori dancing; Gary Matsumoto, Calvin Matsumoto and Stuart Noda for delivering tables, chairs, etc. to set up the picnic area; Alice Tateishi, Margie Sunahara, Carol Kawano and Seiko Okiumura for organizing the food; Larry Sunahara, Trent, Victor Lee and Brian Le in the assemblage and floating of the lanterns.

We are also grateful for the leadership of Trent Sunahara, Cabinet President, for our successful Toronagashi Service and picnic and to Reverend Finch, our guest minister from Portland who conducted the Toronagashi Ritual with the assistance of Kaleb Snider, who is in training to become a Buddhist minister. Thank you, Caren Yamamoto, Alice Tateishi and Carol Kawano for preparing the vegetables for the service.

Arigato to you all!





TAIKO

Janene DelMundo

Toro Nagashi is a very special event for taiko members every year. Not only performing taiko, but also getting to see our members' family, temple members and participate in Bon Odori. This year's performance was even more special as we had our Kodomo class students (ages 4-6) perform for the first time. They were all so brave and did very well. I'm sure they put a smile on everyone's face! We also had Ann, a guest flute performer, to accompany one of our songs, *Choshi Hayauchi*. Many taiko members also made lanterns for their loved ones and they looked so beautiful on the pond.

Thank you everyone for making this event successful!





WORDS OF THE BUDDHA
Selected Verses from the Dhammapada

Heedfulness

The wise ones, ever meditative and steadfastly persevering, alone experience *nibbāna*,
the incomparable freedom from bondage.

Ever grows the glory of him who is energetic, mindful and pure in conduct, discerning
and self-controlled, righteous and heedful.

By effort and heedfulness, discipline and self-mastery, let the wise one make for himself
an island which no flood can overwhelm.

Do not give way to heedlessness. Do not indulge in sensual pleasures.
Only the heedful and meditative attain great happiness.

KITCHEN REPAIR

Margie Sunahara

A couple of months ago, the kitchen ceiling above the stoves had evidence of termite damage. Our maintenance crew, Larry and Mike Sunahara, tackled the problem by opening the ceiling and found minimal termite damage. The roof also needs to be repaired before the rainy season. Thank goodness for Stuart Noda's scaffolding, it made the job safer and easier. The kitchen still needs to be painted, but we are thankful for Larry and Mike taking the time to assess and repair the ceiling. Here are a few pictures of the work that was done.

Photo #1 is the initial opening of the ceiling. Photo #2 is the termite damage to the drywall. Photo #3 is the ceiling repaired and ready for painting.





AJI CORNER

Official Spam website

SPAM MUSUBI BAKE

Ingredients

Spam

- 6 oz Less Sodium Spam about 1/2 of the can
- 1 tbsp Cooking Oil neutral taste preferred

Musubi Sauce

- 2 tbsp Japanese Sake
- 2 tbsp Sweetener your preferred sweetener
- 2 tbsp Soy Sauce

Rice

- 2 Cups Rice rice of choice
- 2 tsp Japanese Furikake

Toppings

- 2 tbsp Kewpie Mayo
- Shredded Seaweed



Instructions

1. Gather all the ingredients.
2. Cut spam into cubes.
3. Prepare the sauce by combining 2 tbsp Japanese sake, 2 tbsp soy sauce, and 2 tbsp sweetener in a skillet. Bring the sauce to a simmer and let it simmer for 20-30 seconds, then remove from heat.
4. Add oil to a wok or a large skillet and preheat it under high heat. Once the pan is heated, add in cubed spam and sear until browned, around 2-3 minutes, then toss in the sauce and mix. Transfer the seared spam onto plate.
5. Mix rice with furikake in a mixing bowl and set aside.
6. In a suitable baking dish, add the rice, then layer the seared spam on top along with all the sauce. Squeeze Kewpie mayo over the top and broil at 500°F until the mayo turns slightly brown, about 3-5 minutes.
7. Top with shredded seaweed and serve.

You may have noticed lately that the Spam Musubi Bake has become a very popular dish. While shopping at Walmart, there was a prominent display of Spam with the ingredients placed alongside found in this recipe. In fact, one of the potluck dishes at our recent Toronagashi picnic was this dish placed on the table for all to enjoy. Bon Appetit Everyone! *(Submitted by Liz Yokoyama)*



Upcoming Services (In-house & Zoom at **1:30 pm** unless posted otherwise)

September 27 – Autumn *Higan* Service

October 18 – *Eitaikyo* Memorial Service

November 15 – Monthly *Daishiku* Service

November 22 – *Shichi-Go-San*/Children's Special Blessing and Prayer Service

For more information about the Northern California Koyasan Temple, please visit our website at www.nckoyasan.org

Mark Your Calendars!



- October 11** - Udon/Curry Sale (pre-orders only)
- October 24** - Meditation Class (1:00 p.m. in person)
- November 8** - Temple Mass Clean-up (9:00 am) – Please volunteer to help keep our Temple clean and well maintained
- November 21** - Meditation Class (1:00 p.m. in person)
- December 19** - Mochi Sale (8 am-join us to make mochi and assemble packages for sale.)

Newsletter Staff

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Kaori & David Sakauye, Janene Del Mundo & volunteer contributors for photos taken at Toronagashi