

# LOTUS

The newsletter of the Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple

No. 287

2025 SE Yamhill St. Portland OR 97214 (503) 232-8064

April 2010

<http://nichiren-shu.org/portland/>

## 花祭 Hana Matsuri

Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple will observe Hana Matsuri Service to celebrate the birthday of Sakyamuni Buddha on **Sunday April 11th at 2 pm**

At the celebration, a statue of the baby Buddha is enshrined surrounded by flowers representing the Lumbini garden where the Buddha was born.

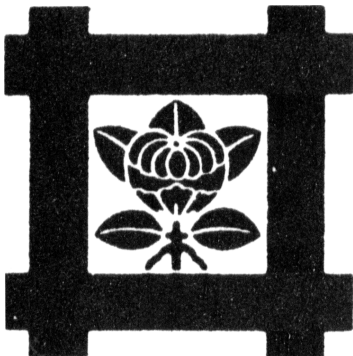
And during the Service, we will celebrate the birth of the Buddha by sprinkling **Ama Cha** (Sweet Tea in Japanese) on the head of an infant Buddha. **After the Service, we will offer Ama Cha with Japanese sweets and a light lunch snack.**

Sensei encourages anyone with the slightest interest to attend even if not on a regular basis. The service is easy to follow for native English speakers. Sensei is very welcoming, the service is peaceful and we enjoy goodies and tea in the social hall downstairs after. It is a real treat for mind and body!

## Spring Ohigan Celebration

Our temple celebrated Spring Ohigan on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Sensei prepared Toba for all our ancestors and we held a special incense offering for them during the service. We had a fire ritual prepared to burn the Toba at the end of the service but the weather did not cooperate so Sensei will do that later.

It was a beautiful service. The main hall was decorated with many flower bouquets, fruits of all kinds, sweets and rice crackers. The service was well attended by members, supporters and guests.



## Spring Bazaar

Our Temple's huge social gathering was March 28th. We celebrated our Sangha and the greater community by inviting everyone to partake in our Temple's legendary hospitality. The event was very well attended and all the volunteers worked very hard to achieve a fantastic result. Sales improved by about 10% compared to last year for a new record! Our community of members and supporters stepped up with generous donations of time, talent and money and deserve our sincere appreciation! Bento included Tonkatsu, Chicken, Tofu and Chow Mein. We had a bounty of home-baked goods. The food was as beautiful as it was delicious. **This was a proud day for our small Sangha to host a worthy community celebration!**

## Construction campaign

**Wheelchair Ramp:** Construction of the new wheelchair ramp and handrail from the parking lot to the Temple Main Hall is spinning up. Our contractor's original design was rejected by the City of Portland planning department. A revised design is now approved. That is the good news. The bad news is that the cost is higher than originally forecast. The contractor will absorb the cost of additional concrete, but the iron railing raw cost is high. The revised bid is \$5200. Temple funds are available provided the membership views this project favorably. The board of directors agreed to give the membership a chance to comment and discuss the plan.

Many thanks to 3 members who contributed to expedite this work with donations totaling \$650!

**Residence:** Per the general membership vote in January, we are proceeding with construction in the residence to convert it to two apartments. The upstairs unit will be rented out to generate income for the Temple's activities. Construction has already commenced starting with plumbing and electrical. Donations to help rebuild Sensei's portion of the residence are especially welcome.

## The Establishment of the Nichiren Shu Order

When Nichiren Shonin was twelve years old, he entered Seichoji Temple in Kiyosumi, Kamogawa City at the Southern tip of the Boso peninsula in Chiba prefecture, Japan to get basic education and to clear his questions about his faith of Nenbutsu. And he became a priest in 1237 at age of sixteen. Under master, Dozenbo, he was given the priestly name Rencho. At that time, Seichoji Temple belonged to the Tendai Sect.

Later, Rencho also studied at Kamakura, the seat of the Government of Japan, and at Enryakuji Temple on Mt. Hieizan near Kyoto which is the Headquarters of the Tendai Sect of Japan. The Tendai Sect was founded by Tendai Daishi (538A.D. – 597A.D.) in China and then introduced to Japan by Saicho (767A.D. – 822A.D.).

Rencho was convinced through his many years' study of Buddhism that the true teaching of the Buddha is found in the Sutra of the lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma, popularly known today as the Lotus Sutra. Sakyamuni Buddha declares in the Lotus Sutra that he is the Original Buddha and that all other Buddhas arise from him. According to the Lotus Sutra, the historical person Sakyamuni Buddha is both the founder of Buddhism and the source of all other Buddhas. From this, Rencho found that the prevalent worship of the Buddhas other than Sakyamuni was against the true teaching of the Buddha as written in the Lotus Sutra.

In April, 1253, Rencho returned to Seichoji temple. On the early morning of April 28<sup>th</sup>, Rencho chanted "**Namu Myoho Renge Kyo**" at

the peak of Asahigamori forest in Seichoji Temple, facing the rising Sun from the Pacific Ocean. The chant popularly known as the Daimoku or the Sacred Title means, "**I devote myself to the Lotus Sutra.**" The Daimoku also implies, "**I devote myself to the Original Sakyamuni Buddha**", because Sakyamuni Buddha is revealed as the first Buddha only in the Lotus Sutra and nowhere else. Having used this sacred occasion, Rencho changed his name to Nichiren.

The word **NICHI** in Japanese, meaning Sun is referred to in the Chapter 21 of the Lotus Sutra where it says, "**Just as the light of the sun and moon expels all dimness and darkness, so this man, living and working in the world, drives out the darkness (illusion) of all living beings**". The word **REN** in Japanese, meaning Lotus is referred to in the Chapter 15 of the Lotus Sutra where it says, "**Be not influenced by environment. The Lotus blossoms, never to be soiled by the muddy waters whence it grows.**"

On the day of his first chanting of the Daimoku, Nichiren Shonin stood before a large gathering of monks and other important personages in the South wing hall of Seichoji Temple, prepared to deliver his first sermon. The 28<sup>th</sup> of April, the date of Nichiren Shonin's first chanting of the Daimoku is designated as the day of Founding of Nichiren Buddhism.

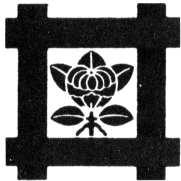
Sincerely with Gassho  
Rev. Myosho Obata

### Japanese Community Graduation Banquet:

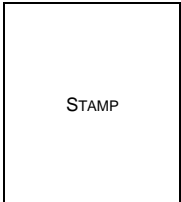
If you know any graduating high-school seniors that would like to participate in the Banquet, please send an e-mail to [nbt-portland@clear.net](mailto:nbt-portland@clear.net) or contact Bill Sugahiro. It will be the 62nd annual High School Graduation Banquet and will be held at the Multnomah Athletic Club in May. Last year almost \$20,000 in scholarships were awarded to 15 graduating high school seniors.

#### Memorial Service ( April, 2010)

1<sup>st</sup> Year 2009 Yukie Kato (Apr .9 ) Bernice Okazaki(Apr.10)  
7<sup>th</sup> year 2004 Betty Miura (Apr .29)  
27<sup>th</sup> Year 1984 Sadaichi Ogami (Apr.11)  
37<sup>th</sup> Year 1974 Masae Katayama(Apr. 11)  
43<sup>rd</sup> Year 1968 Tsuneyuki Kobayashi (Apr.5 )



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