



RISSHO KOSEI-KAI OF NEW YORK

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NEWSLETYTER

JANUARY 2018

【 Aspire for a world in which we mutually achieve liberation 】

Happy New Year!

The curtain has opened for the Year 2018. As the temple bells were ringing out the old year and ringing in 2018, I welcomed the New Year enveloped by an indescribably clean atmosphere of fresh energy, as if the area had been briskly purified. Here, now, the present had completely changed. And my heart and mind felt noticeably renewed.



It was only one night passing to the next day's dawn, but it felt as if everything had wondrously been reborn.

On this day, when "first visit for worship in the New Year" to temples and shrines is observed throughout Japan, the New Year is welcomed at Risho Kosei-kai's Great Sacred Hall in Tokyo with special prayer and recitation of the Lotus Sutra for world peace, and for the happiness of all humankind.

I also visited the Great Sacred Hall on New Year's morning. And I started the year 2018 with a vow in my heart: "May there be peace in the world; may we create a world in which we revere one another. First, I will start by revering others."

This is a significant year for us, for we welcome the eightieth anniversary of Risho Kosei-kai's founding. President Niwano announced the 2018 annual Guidelines for Members' Practice of the Faith · Basic Vision toward the one-hundredth anniversary of our organization's founding.

The President stated: "The universe and nature are undergoing creation and change without a pause. Just like the truth of the universe, we must not stagnate, but always apply ourselves to facing everything that comes our way with a renewed spirit."

This year Risho Kosei-kai marks the eightieth anniversary of its founding. Our eighty-year history was built upon the unsparing dedication of our Founder and Cofounder (who often had to forego sleep and meals), as well as the many leaders and members who have preceded us.

On this important year, moving toward the one-hundredth anniversary of Risho Kosei-kai, I hope that each of us will be firmly resolved to take creative steps forward to repay our debt of gratitude to our predecessors.

Furthermore, at our organization's training session for all ministers, the President taught that it is important that we, as humans, acquire a high level of spirituality to prepare ourselves, training our mental attitude toward the one-hundredth anniversary. For that, the role that each of us should fulfill is to diligently practice in one's life in society; to work towards perfecting oneself; to share the teachings with many people; and to guide others to the Dharma.

I visualized dreams spreading widely with the steps and roles each of us will take, starting from this eightieth anniversary year. And when all is said and done, I am filled with the joy of having encountered this valuable teaching. Today, here and now, with a wish to be able to repay my debt of gratitude, I firmly secure deep in my heart an aspiration, renewed each day, for constant diligence.

Now, we experience various sufferings because of our "selfish ego" which emerges in our daily lives.



I, me, my...we may know our self-centered viewpoint is making us suffer, but we ourselves developed the “selfish ego”, so we tend to hang on to our attachment. As result, we unconsciously start to desperately protect the “selfish ego.” It must be so difficult to abandon it.

The President tells us that in Rissho Kosei-kai, to participate in hoza sessions, perform sutra recitation, or to practice “putting others first” are the very secret keys to discarding our “ego” and attaining the “egoless” state.

Moreover, the President said that in sports, such as judo and kendo, and in the visual and performing arts as well, the model for physical postures or moves is called “form.” He further stated that “form” is not limited to these areas, and is also evident also in how we comport ourselves in our daily lives.

Being punctual, greeting our family members by saying “good morning,” straightening our shoes when we take them off, and clearly responding “yes” when spoken to, are examples of such forms. Each and every one of our behaviors is an outward expression of our state of mind. The examples stated are expression of the mind of consideration and compassion for others. According to the President, embodying consideration and compassion as the basis of the “form” of our daily lives, and repeatedly putting such actions into daily practice, will allow the mind of compassion to be even more deeply engraved in our hearts. Putting this “form” into action is actually our practice to become buddhas.

I am truly convinced! When we focus on anything with sincerity and whole-hearted devotion, there will come a time when we notice that our ego has, without our knowing, been removed; this brings us closer to the mental state of buddhahood.

The President stated so clearly the method of liberating ourselves from selfish ego and becoming free. There is so much to be grateful for. We are truly blessed.

This year, the eightieth anniversary of our organization’s founding, I aspire for a world in which we mutually achieve liberation. I wish to walk together in that world with all the members of our Sangha.

Gassho
New York Center Minister
Etsuko Fujita

Topics

Happy New Year!

This year marks the 28th year since I received the role of chapter leader.

When I reflect on my way of life until now, I recalled how I was taught the practice of revering others’ buddha nature, not to view and “measure” people I encounter based on my own ruler nor through colored glasses, and to receive people with a pure unblemished mind and heart. However, I tend to be selfish. My ruler was very firm and refused to break, and I did not even realize my glasses were tinted with color. For many years, I lived my life stuck in my own ways and opinions.

Although I am stubborn, lately at times when I feel I’ve reached my limits, I find myself able to think that there is no person exactly the same as me, and that each person is living his or her own life to the fullest.

Through such experiences, I have come to find my kind and gentle heart and am feeling more at ease. Once again, I am feeling grateful every day.

As I welcome the New Year, I would like to cherish all my encounters and diligently continue my practice.

Gassho,
Chicago Chapter Leader
Kayo Murakami





Enlightent Day Service
 MC: Yasuko Vendley

- * Odaimoku 3 times
- * Members Vow
- * Sutra Recitation (4 chapters)
 Leader: James Lynch
 Gong: Keiko Idesako
 Wooden Drum: Yui Sugino
- * View Video Enlightenment of Shakyamuni Buddha
- * Presentation by Yoshi
 Howie is accepting Shakyamuni Buddha's wish and putting the Dharma into practice in his daily Experiences of awareness through this practice
- * Volunteers to do similar presentation on awareness through the Dharma
- * Odaimoku 3 times

12/3 Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment Day Service

Presentation of Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment



How the Buddha's wish is being put into practice and awareness gained.



Hoza



12/17 End of the Year General Cleaning



SCHEDULE FOR NEW YORK CHAPTER

January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 1PM New Year's Day Service	2	3	4 9AM Memorial Service for Founder 10AM Hoza	5	6 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
7 1PM President's First Sermon President Niwano Guidance	8 9AM Sutra Recitation	9 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	10 9AM Memorial Service for Cofounder	11 9AM ご供養 10AM Monthly Memorial Service	12 9AM ご供養 10AM Steering Committee Missionary Mtg	13 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
14 1PM The Eternal Buddha Shakyamuni Day 2018 guidelines for Rissho Kosei-kai New Year Dharma Guidance	15 Martin Luther King Day	16 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza 2-4PM Area Leaders' Meeting	17 9AM Sutra Recitation Reach out day	18 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Guidance for Leaders	19 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	20 Closed: Dharma Practices at home
21 Closed	22 9AM Sutra Recitation	23 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	24 9AM Sutra Recitation Reach out day	25 9AM Sutra Recitation	26 9AM Sutra Recitation 10AM Hoza	27 1PM Special Practice of the L.S. Chanting Youth leader Web Ex Meeting
28 1PM Special Practice of the L.S. Chanting	29	30 1PM Special Prayer for renovation	31	2/1	2/2 Last Day	L.S. Chanting 1/27-2/2 Sun,Sat 1 pm J. E. Weekday 9 am Japanese 7 pm English

Special Practice of the L.S.

DATE	ITEM
1/27 (Sat)	The Sutra of Innumerable Meanings Chapter 1,2,3. The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 1
1/28 (Sun)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 2,3
1/29 (Mon)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 4-7
1/30 (Tue)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 8-13
1/31 (Wed)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 14-18
2/1 (Thu)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 19-25
2/2 (Fri)	The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma Chapter 26-28 Meditation Sutra

