

The Spirit Experience: We Breathe Together
Interfaith, Multicultural Service
May 3, 2020
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Translation of Guji Yukiyasu Yamamoto's message:

I wish for a full and complete recovery of the millions of people who are suffering from COVID-19 all over the world, and pray to Kami (deities), the Buddha, and the Gods for getting things resolved as soon as possible.

I pray for the spirits of the people who lost their precious and only life and offer consolation and comfort to their loved ones.

And I am deeply grateful to all the health care professionals and front line workers endeavoring strenuously to help and save many people's lives.

Our mission as priests is to support people in their efforts to achieve inner and outer peace. We conduct rituals and prayers daily in support of that mission.

The unprecedented threat that the coronavirus poses to the entire world calls us to join our hearts in prayer, not just from any one religion but across all religions, to wish for the health, safety, well-being, and peace of mind, body, and spirit for all people.

Although we are facing a very difficult time now, I believe by cultivating inner calmness and peace through mindfulness and prayer we will be granted the strength and resilience needed to overcome sickness and despair.

One little light illuminates one corner. That light kindles another light which kindles the next light. And many lights illuminate the whole country and eventually will illuminate the whole world.

So, let us continue to pray with energy not for ourselves alone but join that energy with many, many people to help restore peace and the original brightness of the world.

Purification is one of the most important teachings in the Shinto tradition. The purification of body, mind, and spirit is intended to symbolize becoming one with the natural world. Shinto obliterates evil by cleansing it, transforms fear into joy, and makes life pure, safe, and joyful.

Purification is not a special practice that is done once in a while or at the Shrine. Daily life rituals such as washing of hands and face, taking a bath or shower, eating a meal, and taking rest or going to bed, contain in them the essence and dignity of purification. So, purification is not a difficult practice, it can be done in ordinary life. Purification does not exist outside of life, but in it.

Practices like hand washing, wearing masks, physical distancing, keeping our surroundings and streets clean are purification rituals that will aid us in saving lives and cleansing the world from the threat of COVID 19.

As I receive the great power of nature, the vital force supporting human life and all life, I will continue practicing and praying for peace, well-being, health, and happiness of all people.