



INTRODUCTION & WHAT TO EXPECT

HOW TO JOIN THE SANGHA ONLINE

[CLICK HERE](#) at least 5 minutes before 6 PM PST/9 PM EST each Thursday night. We suggest you consider rebooting your computer before the meeting and closing out all browsers and other tabs when on the call. This can help with response time and reduce bandwidth issues.

We suggest you log on 10 minutes early your first time and at least 5 minutes early for continuing meetings, so we are able to start on time.

When you join you need to say yes to turning on the camera. You are automatically muted when you enter as a courtesy to the other Sangha attendees. The Online Sangha Administrator will be there to welcome you and answer any questions you may have. If you need help, email us using Linda@RK-ccc.org.

ONLINE MEETING ETIQUETTE

- It is recommended you be in a quiet space while online for the service. This may feel like an online meeting but it is really a “church” service.
- You are muted during the chanting to minimize echoing. But we open the microphones for Hoza. So we request that you turn off phone ringers, notifications, alarms, and noisy equipment.
- If you are using a tablet like an iPad or a smartphone, please stabilize the device or turn off the video when moving it around.
- Please do not email, web surf or work online during the Service. You can take notes during the Dharma Talk if you wish.
- In general, it is helpful to mute your microphone when not speaking. The Administrator may do it for you so always check to see if it is on or off before speaking.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE SERVICE

An RKINA Online Service lasts about 1 hour and has 3 basic parts:

1. Chanting the Opening Liturgy from our [Kyoten](#) which will be shown on your screen as a PowerPoint. It will include the Odaimoku, taking Refuge in the 3 Jewels, chanting a Chapter from the Lotus Sutra in English, and taking Bodhisattva Vows as members of Rissho Kosei-kai;
2. We will have a reading from President Niwano and/or a Dharma Talk (i.e., "sermon") from the ministerial staff; and

3. HOZA or the Circle of Compassion where Sangha members share their issues and other members help them using Buddhist principles and the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. This is a unique feature of Rissho Kosei-kai and takes the teachings and turns them into Buddhism in action!

CHANTING

Members of RKINA chant portions of the Lotus Sutra and the Odaimoku (mantra) "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" as a major part of our traditional service. Translated it means:

- *Namu* - deep respect;
- *Myoho* - workings of the universe;
- *Renge* -white lotus emerging;
- *Kyo* - The sound of the sutra, a thread upon which jewels of wisdom are strung.

The object of our chanting is not to simply read the words in the Kyoten but to blend our voices with the rest of the Sangha in a meditative way. Chanting has been proven to focus the mind on the sacred present moment.

MEMBER'S SASH

When you become a formal member of RKINA, you will receive a sash which is representative of a monk's robe. On the front is "Namu Myoho Renge Kyo" and on the back - "We practice the Bodhisattva Way", in Japanese calligraphy. Wearing the sash during the Online Sangha meeting puts us in a respectful state and reminds us of the sacredness of our actions. Donning the sash so it hangs over the left shoulder and leaves the right shoulder free is a symbolic act to remind us we are entering a spiritual moment.

OJUZU BEADS

We use a string of beads called an Ojuzu. It has 108 beads that are said to represent the 108 human delusions. As we rub the beads together, we call on the Eternal Buddha to be with us. By using a cutting motion as we bow, we signify cutting of worldly delusion and ignorance, the source of all suffering. The beads may also be used in counting repetitions of the Odaimoku.

You will receive a basic set of Ojuzu when you formally join RKINA but most members buy a set that has a look and feel personal to them. [CLICK HERE](#) for an introductory video from Rev. Kris Landsau of The Oklahoma Dharma Center on the use of the Ojuzu in RKINA.

GASSHO

During chanting we hold our hands together flat with with palms facing each other at chest height in a form called "gassho". You may have your Ojuzu between your fingers or you may be empty-handed. Gassho is a way of showing respect to The Buddha, to those who have gone before us and to the buddha-nature in each of us.