

Buddhist Temple of Alameda welcomes new minister

By **SARAH TAN** | Correspondent

January 3, 2018 at 6:20 a.m.



Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto is the new resident minister of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, succeeding longtime minister Rev. Zuikei Taniguchi, who retired earlier this year. (Sarah Tan/For Bay Area News Group)

ALAMEDA — The Buddhist Temple of Alameda is welcoming a new resident minister, Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto, who succeeds Rev. Zuikei Taniguchi.

Taniguchi was the Buddhist Temple of Alameda's resident minister for more than 30 years and presided over generations of temple members before retiring earlier this year.

Fujimoto is from a family of Buddhist ministers and will be joining the congregation after spending more than a decade as a minister in Oregon. He said he was excited to learn a new city and to be welcomed by Alameda's Buddhist community.

“It’s an adventure for me to come here and I’m enjoying exploring a lot of the history in Alameda,” he said, also adding that in a way, there’s a “comfort in the similarities between temples.”



"It's an adventure for me to come here and I'm enjoying exploring a lot of the history in Alameda," says Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto, the new resident minister at the Buddhist Temple of Alameda.
Sarah Tan/For Bay Area News

Fujimoto officially joined the Alameda temple in early November. He had first enjoyed a long career as a sculpture artist. However, he retired after he felt that line of work was becoming too physically taxing.

"After 20 years, I thought maybe there's something more health conducive," Fujimoto said. He was encouraged to return to his original roots, as a minister, and was re-ordained in 2004.

Former temple board member Mas Takano said Taniguchi is missed because he had led the temple for so many years — a rarity when most ministers cycle in and out of areas.

"We miss him and his personality. He'd climb up on the roof and clean the eaves and paint the fence outside," Takano said of Taniguchi. "You just don't find a minister like that in any religion." But in other ways, Takano said he's glad to have a younger, new minister joining them.

"Change is good, we miss our other minister, but Reverend Fujimoto brings a different perspective to our congregation," Takano said.

Fujimoto said he hasn't yet considered any new changes for the temple, and that for now, he's just getting used to the new area.

"Change is good, we miss our other minister, but Reverend Fujimoto brings a different perspective to our congregation," Takano said.

Fujimoto said he hasn't yet considered any new changes for the temple, and that for now, he's just getting used to the new area. "I'm still the new guy in town, and it takes time to get things going and cultivate and develop new programs," he said. "But we want to be open and inclusive to other faiths and other people." He added that he and the temple practice Shin Buddhism, a sect that has been practiced by everyday people, "doing everyday things."

"I'm looking forward to sharing that mentality with others," Fujimoto said.