

Hungry Ghost Festival

August 22, 2021

The Chinese believe that during the 7th month of the lunar calendar the gates of the underworld open up and releases the ghosts (including the spirits of one's ancestors), to mingle with the living. It is said that when the ghosts come out they are hungry and if not fed, will resort to mischief. To appease the hungry ghosts, Tin Hau Temple performs an ancestor worship ceremony, acknowledging and offering them food and money. This tradition is called Chung-Yun (Hungry Ghost Festival) or Siu Yee "burning clothes". Siu Yee refers to the tradition of burning joss paper which represents money, clothes or other items that the spirits can use in the afterlife.



Mr. Wong, Tin Hau Temple caretaker, give thanks to the ancestors with President Daren Lum looking on.



In the kitchen, friends from Big Island and India are helping to prepare the food. In India, they have a similar ghost festival called Ullambana. In Japan it is called Obon.



Plates of Hawaiian food are prepared in honor of the spirits of the Hawaiians who had for centuries lived on the land where Lum Sai Ho Tong building now sits.



The plates of food are placed along the sidewalk outside of the temple for the wandering spirits to partake.



People brought bags of folded joss paper which were then placed inside the incinerator at the temple. The bags were often labeled with the names of the ancestors for whom they are for.



The joss paper is burnt to allow the spirits to use it which makes them happy.



Many families came to pay respect to their ancestors.