

# 'SAIGON DAY 2026' GRAND COMMEMORATION MARKS 50 YEARS SINCE SAIGON LOST ITS NAME

*hundreds of Vietnamese Americans joined at the Vietnam War Memorial in Westminster, California, for the "Saigon Day 2026" Grand Commemoration.*

WESTMINSTER, CA, UNITED STATES, July 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a solemn and deeply moving atmosphere, hundreds of Vietnamese Americans joined religious leaders, elected officials, representatives of civic and community organizations, intellectuals, artists, members of the media, and guests from many regions at the Vietnam War Memorial in Westminster, California, for the ["Saigon Day 2026"](#) Grand Commemoration, calling for the restoration of the name Saigon 50 years after it was removed (1976–2026).

The event was organized by the [Saigon For Saigon Movement](#) in cooperation with the Great Viet Party, Humanist Socialist Party, Assembly For Democracy of Vietnam, Vietnam Democracy Federation, Vietnam Human Rights Network, Movement of the Vietnam Laity in Diaspora, and Vietnamese Nationalist Party.

The commemoration marked half a century since the historic name Saigon was changed by the Communist government of Vietnam in July 1976. For generations of Vietnamese people, particularly refugees from Communism and their descendants, Saigon is more than the name of a city. It represents history, culture, a way of life, and a collective memory deeply associated with the free society of South Vietnam.

The program opened with a prayer led by Venerable Thich Minh Tuyen, Third Supreme Patriarch of the World Mendicant Buddhist Sangha, representing the Interfaith Council. Phan Thanh Châu, Chairman of the Organizing Committee, welcomed the guests and explained the significance of



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the commemoration, declaring: “The program also welcomed guests from Atlanta, Dallas, San Jose, Europe, and Australia. Saigon shares the destiny of the Vietnamese nation and is the sacred soul of Vietnam.”

Father Andrew Nguyễn Hữu Lễ, founder of the Saigon For Saigon Movement in 2006, addressed: “Hồ Chí Minh’s responsibility for the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent people in Saigon. During the 1968 Tet Offensive, Ho Chi Minh himself—then President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the North—exploited the truce between the North and the South to plot a surprise attack on the South.

He also recalled the Movement’s 20-year journey and reaffirmed its determination to continue defending the name Saigon as an inseparable and indelible part of Vietnamese history. and The 20-year journey of the Saigon For Saigon Movement stands as evidence of the enduring vitality

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*Father Andrew Nguyen huu Le*

of the name Saigon. This year’s commemoration delivered a clear message: to strengthen the spirit of the Vietnamese people inside the country, to pass historical memory to younger generations, and to continue advocating for recognition and respect for the name Saigon”

Westminster Mayor Nguyễn Mạnh Chí addressed the gathering in both Vietnamese and English. Pharmacist Cao Xuân Thanh Ngọc delivered remarks in English on the meaning of Saigon to successive generations of Vietnamese people.

One of the most moving speeches came from Võ Minh

Thư, 26, who was born in San Jose, California. Although she was not born or raised in Saigon, her voice as a young Vietnamese American demonstrated that the memory of Saigon has not ended with the first generation of refugees but continues to be passed on to future generations. Phạm Thiên Thanh, Chairwoman of Vietnam Democracy Federation, proclaimed the Saigon Day 2026 Declaration, affirming the historical significance of the commemoration and the continuing goal of restoring the name Saigon.

Lý Thanh Liêm, Executive Director of the Saigon For Saigon Movement, declared: “Saigon still exists and is shining brightly in the eyes of our compatriots gathered here today.” He



Father Andrew Le Huu Nguyen delivered a speech on the significance of "Saigon Day"

emphasized that the Grand Commemoration was held not merely to remember the past, but also to fulfill a historical mission: to restore truth to history and return the soul to the nation. The central message of the commemoration was clear: for the past 50 years, despite efforts by the Communist government of Vietnam and its propaganda apparatus to erase the memory of Saigon, that memory has continued to live in the hearts and minds of Vietnamese people both inside Vietnam and throughout the world. The Saigon of a humane, tolerant, and open civilization exists not only on maps or in official documents. It lives in Vietnamese culture, in the achievements of more than four million Vietnamese overseas,



Saigon lives on in the achievements of the more than four million Vietnamese living abroad, as well as in the memories and sentiments passed down from one generation to the next.

and in the memories and affections passed from one generation to the next.

The Executive Director of the Movement expressed its gratitude to the religious leaders who attended, prayed, and joined the community in solidarity; to elected officials who have stood with the Vietnamese community in preserving the history and heritage of a free Saigon; and to Father Andrew Nguyễn Hữu Lễ, founder and spiritual driving force of the Movement.

The Movement also thanked the Organizing Committee, participating organizations, members of the media, and all those who traveled from near and far to attend the commemoration.

The cultural program reflected both remembrance and the hope of restoring the name Saigon. The Xuân Đầm Prisoner Songs Ensemble performed "Return to Me the Name Saigon," while singer Phong Dinh presented "Saigon Dreams of the Day of Reunion," composed by Trần Chí Phúc. Songs of homeland, return, and reunion created moments of deep emotion among those in attendance.

The daytime commemoration concluded with a renewed affirmation that the Movement's journey will continue. If the daytime program represented determination, history, and responsibility, the "Saigon Night" program held later that evening offered a space for memory, emotion, and the music of the homeland. Through song and shared remembrance, participants once again experienced the image of a vibrant Saigon, rich in human warmth and looking toward the future.

From Little Saigon, the spiritual capital of Vietnamese refugees in the United States, the "Saigon Day 2026" Grand Commemoration sent a powerful message to Vietnamese communities

throughout the world:

Saigon does not belong only to the past. Saigon continues to live in the memory, culture, and consciousness of generations of Vietnamese people around the world.

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