



Preparing for Priest Ordination

Jeff Sherman, is preparing for priest ordination, which we hope to have early in October. The ceremony of being ordained and receiving the precepts as a priest is *Shukke Tokudo* in Japanese, and it means of leaving home and accomplishing the way. Although we don't always literally leave home and move to a monastery or practice center, one way to "leave home" is to make supporting formal practice at the zendo one's highest priority. Helping the temple run smoothly and making zazen practice available to others is the way a priest serves the sangha. Obviously this entails reducing the activity and commitments in one's life in order to be available for zendo practice.

When one "leaves home," one places the needs of the sangha above one's personal preferences, and the sangha supports the priest. This support or encouragement may take different forms. One way our sangha may support the practice of being ordained as a priest is for the sangha to provide the robes priests wear, the kimono and koromo, under the *okesa*. The robes can be a gift from the sangha to the ordainee, and serving the temple and supporting zendo practice is the priest's gift to the sangha. I think this is a good reflection of our interdependence. *If you would like to make a donation toward the cost of the robes and bowls, please note "Robe Fund" on your donation.*

Another way to support the ordination of priests is to help sew their ordination robe, the *okesa*. There will be sewing sessions throughout the summer and everyone is welcome.

It is my hope that together as a sangha, we will benefit from the training of priests and find out how it will shape the future growth and maturity of our sangha.

In gassho,
Taitaku Josho, Abbess

Practice Intensive

June 3-29. See pages 6 and 7 for more details.

Temple Gift

A scroll of Shakyamuni Buddha with the two founders of Soto Zen in Japan, Eihei Dogen Zenji and Keizan Jokin Zenji, now hangs in the zendo. The scroll was a gift from the Soto Zen Headquarters in Japan honoring the Chapel Hill Zen Center as a formally recognized Soto Zen Temple.



Holidays

The Zen Center will be closed on Memorial Day, **Monday, May 28**, and on **Wednesday and Thursday, July 4 and 5**.

Dharma Talks

Daitsu Thomas Wright will give a public Dharma talk on Sunday morning, May 6, at 10:30.

Kuden Paul Boyle will give a public Dharma Talk on Sunday, May 13, at 10:30.

Josho Pat Phelan will give public Dharma Talks on Sundays, May 20, and June 10, at 10:30.

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All-day Sitting

There will be an all-day sitting on Sunday, June 10, from 6:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. The sitting will begin with orientation on Saturday night at 7:30, and will include instruction on the meal form and one period of zazen. The regular Sunday schedule, with zazen at 9:00 and 9:50 and Dharma Talk at 10:30, will be open to everyone. The day will include zazen, a lecture, *dokusan* and a work period, as well as breakfast and lunch. The fee is \$10 for members and \$20 for others. ***It is alright to sit half of the day, but please sign up in advance, and please speak to Josho Sensei if this is your first all-day sitting.*** For more information on the oryoki meal form see: <http://www.kannondo.org/oryoki>

Study Group

The June Study Group will meet on Thursday evenings, from 6:45-8:00, on June 7, 14, 21, and 28. We will read and discuss the teachings of Katagiri Roshi in the first section of the book *The Light that Shines Through Infinity*, pages 3-52. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge. Copies of the book are for sale in the entryway.

Way-seeking Mind Talks

As part of the June Practice Intensive there will be two Way-seeking Mind talks on Tuesday nights, June 5 and 19, at 7:40, following one period of zazen at 7:00 PM. The talks will be given by Lance Ashdown, and Bunkai Steve Tracy. Lance began practicing zazen in 1992 with Sasaki Roshi at Mt. Baldy Zen Center in California, followed by practicing with Joko Beck and Diane Rizzetto, before moving to CHZC in 2010. Bunkai began practicing by himself and later, in the early 1980's, had instruction with Ed Brown. Bunkai was ordained in 2012 in Kobun Chino's lineage, while practicing at Tassajara.

Workshop

Shakyo: The Practice of Copying Sutras

Saturday, June 16, 10:00-noon

Living this subtle dharma everyday, how do you see it? Allowing this subtle dharma into yourself moment after moment, how do you see it? When chanting, we experience it. When reading, we experience it. When writing and copying, we experience it. What we are truly copying? Literally we can say that I am writing my life through my action of copying this most precious subtle dharma.

— Maizumi Roshi

Writing out sutras or other Buddhist texts is a common practice in Zen temples. Copying a sutra is zazen, just as chanting, eating in the zendo, and walking meditation are. Copying the *Heart Sutra* is most common—the Japanese characters can be traced using rice paper over a template—but in this workshop, you may copy any sutra, daily chant, or part of a Buddhist text. Examples will be available. Don't hesitate to come if you think your handwriting isn't good enough, wholehearted attention is all that is necessary! Please bring a pen you like and blank paper or a blank book. All are welcome! To sign up, please contact Choro at subtlegate@gmail.com

Children's Program

The Zen Center's Children's program offers children a variety of activities, including meditation, story, craft, song, and movement, as well as participation in Zen Center events and celebrations throughout the year. In each meeting, the children have the space and time to practice living mindfully and learn about Buddhist teachings and contexts while giving their parents an opportunity to meditate in the concurrent adult program. The Children's Program meets twice a month, on Sundays, from 8:50 until 11:00. Meetings will be held May 27, with a picnic on June 3. After June 3, there will be a summer break until September. To sign up, or simply for more information, please contact Maura High, the program coordinator, at maurahigh@gmail.com

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Study Hall

During the month of June, there will be a Study Hall on Monday mornings, after zazen, from 7:45 until 8:30 or 9:00. Everyone is welcome to come and read Buddhist materials or sew Buddha's Robe. Tea will be available. Bring coffee if you like!

Eco-Dharma Discussion Group

May 13, 11:15

In this group we informally explore Buddhist teachings on the natural world, caring for the natural world as an expression of bodhisattva vow, and our own responses to current environmental issues. If you are interested, please contact Zenki Kathleen Batson at lulu@rubblebuss.com.

Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death

Sunday, May 20, 11:15

This is an informal discussion group that gives the opportunity to share readings, information, and explore conversations among ourselves on these topics. Please contact Kris Garvin at krisgarvin@gmail.com, or Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, if you have questions, would like more information. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age.

People of Color Sitting Group

Wednesday nights from 6:00-7:30

The POC Sitting Group begins with zazen at 6:00, followed by the option to stay for group discussion and community building. Both those new to meditation, or experienced, are warmly welcome to join us or drop in as you like. For more information, contact Conal or Kriti at pocsittinggroup@gmail.com. As usual, instruction in zazen and an orientation are offered to the public on Sunday morning at 9:00, and on Tuesday night at 7:00.

Looking Ahead

Rohatsu Sesshin – November 30 - December 7

Spring Sesshin – March 1-6, a *Genzo-e* sesshin led by Shohaku Okumura

Recovery Meeting

The Recovery Meeting meets on Tuesday nights at 7:30. This is a recovery group with a Buddhist perspective on the 12-Step Program which meets at the Chapel Hill Zen Center. The meetings begin with twenty minutes of silent meditation. For more information, contact: 919-265-7600 or ZenandRecovery@gmail.com.

Sangha Network

The CHZC has a Sangha Network of volunteers to offer short-term assistance to those in the sangha who need help with simple tasks such as shopping, arranging for meals, or transportation, due to transitions in one's life including illness, disability, or death of a loved one. If you would like to volunteer or if you need assistance, please contact Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com or Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com.

Chinese Calligraphy and Brush Painting

Jinxu Zhao will teach Chinese Calligraphy on Sunday afternoons from 2:15-3:45, on May 13 and 20, June 3 and 17. Chinese Brush Painting is from 2:15-4:15.29. Fees are \$30 per class, or \$110 for 4 classes. Please contact Jinxu at (919) 484-7524 or Jxznc@aol.com to register or for more information. Jinxu is also available to teach children's classes.

On Breathing

Jakuko Mo Ferrell

In *Zen Mind Beginners Mind*, Suzuki Roshi said, "When we practice zazen, all that exists is the movement of breathing, but we are aware of this movement. To be aware of this movement is to be aware not of your small self, but your universal nature or Buddha nature."

Sometimes when I try to be aware of my breath in zazen, I feel like I'm adding a little control to the process. For me it's difficult not to interfere with the quality of the breath in any way when watching it closely. Even so, I stay with the breath with as minimal effort, as I can. I notice how my breath is moving around and where it is obstructed. If I don't make some effort to bring

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awareness to my breath, I'm just sitting, thinking. I try to be careful not to change the breath, but to feel it lightly. It's tricky not to interfere, but I have experienced times when my mind and body are very calm. The breath is there on its own just as it is. There's awareness and maybe curiosity, I'm just enjoying breathing. So I've experienced the difference between control and no control, but I can't make myself drop all control. It has to happen naturally when I'm not interfering.

Bringing your full attention to the breath can create gaps in the stream of thought. In *A New Earth*, Eckhart Tolle wrote, "As you focus on your breathing, gaps will occur in the stream of thinking...Don't worry about the duration of the gaps. Gradually they lengthen by themselves. Being aware of your breathing takes attention from thoughts and creates inner space. It is one way of generating consciousness. Be aware of your breath...Our conscious breath is enough to make some space where before, there was the succession of one thought after the other...Breathing isn't something you do, it is something you witness as it happens."

Larry Rosenberg, in *Breath by Breath* connects our breathing to our life. He said, "When we focus on the breath, we are focusing on our life force. Life begins with our first breath and will end with our last one. It makes sense that it would have a profound influence on all the moments in between. To contemplate breathing is to contemplate life itself."

When I give zazen instruction, I point out that in the *Fukanzasengi*, Dogen wrote, "Breathe naturally through your nose." That's all he says there. I let people know it is important not to try to make their breath a certain way, deep, long or calm, but to just notice how it is. My teacher, Josho has suggested that it can be helpful to find one place in your body to rest your awareness on the breath -- your chest, or your upper or lower abdomen.

When I am becoming more sensitive to my breath, I notice that my breath is very sensitive to my state of mind. If it is entering and exiting

easily or if it is short and tight, my breath reflects my state of being. When I'm worried, my body tightens and my breath is constricted. You can use awareness of the breath to see how the breath can show you your body and mind, how it becomes a bridge to the body and mind. During zazen instruction I suggest with each exhalation to try to fully let go. Let go of thoughts and feelings. Let go of any tightness you notice in the body as you exhale. As you breathe in, feel your knees, hips, back, shoulders, chest, abdomen, and with the exhalation, release anything you are holding.

When sitting for longer periods with awareness of your breathing, your breath may become deeper and finer and you may find the body becomes more relaxed. You can sit longer with more ease. One thing I have noticed happening after I have been sitting a while is, if I have gotten really lost in thought, sometimes I am pulled back to present by the pain in my right hip. My thoughts and feelings seem to cause my abdomen to tighten. The breath isn't moving freely and suddenly I notice my back or hip hurts. Then I come back to breath, letting go of tightness. As I exhale, focusing on the breath and body, I feel movement caused by breath, from the lungs, to diaphragm, to abdomen, to legs. Opening up and letting go will change the sensation in my hips and back.

Ed Brown, a disciple of Suzuki Roshi said, "You might notice when you sit, that the places that are hurting, you are not breathing into. When a place in your body feels pain, check to see if you're breathing there. Our tendency is to ignore and avoid places with pain. And literally the breath doesn't go there, it stops short. Can you allow the breath into the area of pain? It's very subtle. Like your legs experiencing pain. The lungs are not in the legs, but your legs will move on the inhalation and exhalation. You have to let go of the struggle between the way it is, and the way you want it to be."

Ed Brown talked about the breath another time, saying, "In practice when we follow the breath continuously, we are developing another kind of

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mind, a mind not concerned with how the breath should be. Just be with the breath exactly, precisely. It is not a mind different from the breath, it is the mind of the breath. So we practice letting go of the mind, of accomplishing, attaining, achieving. We practice entering the mind of the breath....This is opening, unfolding, blossoming, ...but we can't rush it. It's the work of a lifetime. Our breath is not just in the front of our body, but in the back, the stomach, the shoulders, We can touch the pain in our body with the breath softening around the pain. Breath inside breath, breath welcoming home the breath."

During a sesshin here in 2007, Ed Brown talked about realizing through the body and breath. He said, "Help your breath realize itself. We are usually directing our bodies, giving it instructions, 'Do this, do that,' rather than noticing how is my body and breath. For realizing the breath when you inhale, Don't say, 'Oh an inhalation, just as I expected it to be.' Your inhalation varies from your expectation of it. It is not like your conception of it. You don't have to think, Is this the right breath? A good one? The one I want? Set aside your ideas about the breath to have, should it feel like this? Is it where it should be? Just allow the breath to realize itself moment after moment. You are not training your breath, you are training your awareness to be subtle and soft enough to follow your breath where it goes. We want to be in charge, but allow your breath to be however it is. This is our compassion."

In *The New Earth*, Eckhart Tolle said, "The breath has no form. This is one of the reasons why breath awareness is an extremely effective way to bring space into your life, generating consciousness. The breath awareness forces you into the present moment, which is the key to all inner transformation. You may notice you cannot think and be 'aware' of your breathing."

While we are alive, we are breathing. You can't get closer to a transformational tool. And it's free. Out of a 24-hour day, if you want the breath to be transformative, you have to do more than follow your breath in zazen 40 minutes a day. Finding ways to practice breath awareness during

the day is essential. We can't ignore the breath all day and sit down to meditate and expect our habitual thinking to just stop.

We don't live in forests or monasteries. Our lives include work, driving, surviving, etc. Many of our activities can include awareness of the breath, sweeping, doing dishes, driving, walking, brushing your teeth. I have a very fortunate line of work, sewing. I work by myself, which makes it easier to remember to return to breath and presence. I've also found breath and presence practice to support me as *Tenzo* when I have cooked for sesshin. To me the job is daunting – cooking for the sangha and the pressure of getting everything ready on time, making enough and not too much. The first days I worry a lot, and rush around. But as time and the days pass, and I am bringing my breathing and awareness to what's just at hand, just slicing the lemon, stirring the cereal, washing the lettuce, open to possibilities, I relax. I begin to enjoy just cooking, smelling, stirring, the heat, the fans, the expanding grains, the freshness of the moment.

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June Practice Intensive: June 3-29

You are invited to join the four-week Practice Intensive beginning on Sunday, June 3, and going through Friday, June 29. This is an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to daily zazen during a focused period of time, much as one would do at a residential practice center. You may want to experiment with the limits of your time and energy, throwing yourself into the zazen schedule, joining the efforts of others. In so doing, we mutually benefit by enjoying sitting together, while supporting each other.

During the month of June, we will have our usual early morning zazen, Monday through Friday at 6:00 and 6:50, followed by service, and our regular Tuesday night zazen at 7:00. There will also be one period of zazen on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings at 6:00, with a Study Group meeting after zazen on Thursday evenings from 6:45 to 8:00 P.M. There will be an all-day sitting on Sunday, June 10. **Please sign up at the zendo for the all-day sitting.**

Practice Intensive Teas are held after the usual Sunday morning program, on Sundays, June 3, and 24. On Sunday, June 17, there will be a discussion and demonstration of the forms we use in the zendo; so, please bring your questions! ***Those participating in the Practice Intensive are asked to attend the Sunday morning Teas.*** For the first tea, participants will be asked to speak for about 5 minutes about how they came to practice and why they want to participate in the Practice Intensive. Participating in the annual intensive is also a good way to get to know other sangha members. Because of our individual circumstances, ***there is no minimum participation other than the two Practice Period Tea on Sunday mornings.***

Please draw up a realistic schedule, perhaps one that will stretch you a little, and then try to commit yourself to your schedule. Joining others for zazen gives us a clear taste of our mutual interdependence. Our practice supports the practice of others and the practice of others benefits us all.

—*Joshō*

Please return the form on page 7 with a \$10 registration fee by Friday, June 1.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8	June 9
Morning						
9:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	
Tea	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
Evening						
	6:00 zazen	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen		7:30
		7:45 talk		6:40 study grp		Orientation
June 10	June 11	June 12	June 13	June 14	June 15	June 16
Morning						
All-day	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	
Sitting	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
Evening						
	6:00 zazen	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen		
		7:45 zazen		6:40 study grp		
June 17	June 18	June 19	June 20	June 21	June 22	June 23
Morning						
9:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	
Forms	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
Evening						
	6:00 zazen	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen		
		7:45 talk		6:40 study grp		
June 24	June 25	June 26	June 27	June 28	June 29	
Morning						
9:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	
Tea	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
Evening						
	6:00 zazen	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	6:00 zazen		
		7:50 zazen		6:40 study grp		

Name _____ E-mail _____

Chapel Hill Zen Center



P.O. Box 16302
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919) 967-0861

Schedule

Sunday Morning *Tuesday Evening*

9:00 zazen	7:00 zazen
9:40 kinhin	7:40 kinhin
9:50 zazen	7:50 zazen
10:30 service	8:20 service

Monday to Friday

<i>Thursday Evening</i>	6:00 A.M. zazen
6:00 P.M. zazen	6:50 A.M. zazen

Meetings at 5322 NC Highway 86
2.5 miles North of I-40 exit 266

Joshō Pat Phelan, Abbess

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“The point in keeping the precepts is that you are getting at something deeper. At the level of everyday behavior, refraining from killing, lying, stealing, or harming others with your sexual activity is called outer renunciation, a sort of keeping to the list. On the outer level, you follow the rules. But outer renunciation puts you in touch with what’s happening inside... Refraining from harmful speech and action is outer renunciation; choosing not to escape the underlying feelings is inner renunciation. The precepts are a device to put us in touch with the underlying uneasiness, the fundamental dynamic quality of being alive. Working with this feeling and the neurosis it triggers is inner renunciation.

Sticking to the outer form can be just another way of strengthening my fixed identity... In other words, it may only strengthen pride. Unless I also include inner renunciation and admit to the ways I’m propping myself up by building this virtuous identity, then simply following the rules can be almost as damaging as breaking them.

— Pema Chodron, *Living Beautifully with Uncertainty and Change*

Embracing diversity, the Chapel Hill Zen Center expresses the fundamental connection of all beings by welcoming everyone to the practice of zazen. May all beings realize their true nature.