



All-day Sitting

An in-person sitting is planned for Sunday, October 16, from 6:00 AM–5:00 PM, at the Chapel Hill Zen Center. This will be for people who are fully vaccinated, **including a booster**, and who can wear a mask indoors. Orientation will be at 7:30 PM on Saturday night, and we ask that everyone attend. The day will include *zazen*, a Dharma Talk, *dokusan* and a work period, as well as breakfast and lunch. The suggested donation is \$15 for members, and \$25 for others; however, if you are inclined to offer more, that would be very helpful in maintaining Zen Center. *Oryoki* sets are available for use by those who do not have their own, and a \$5 donation is appreciated. Please sign up by the Wednesday before the sitting begins, at info@chzc.org, and if this is your first All-day Sitting, please speak with Josho ahead of time. For more information on the *oryoki* meal form see: <https://kannondo.org/getting-started/oryoki/>

The Sunday morning program of *zazen* at 9:00 and 9:50, and the Dharma Talk at 10:30, are open to the public, for those who are fully vaccinated and wearing an N95 or KN95 mask.

Dharma Talks

Kuden Paul Boyle of Forest City Zen Group, London, ONT, Sunday, will give a talk on September 25, at 10:30, by **Zoom**.

Zenki Kathleen Batson will give a talk on Sunday morning at 10:30, October 16, **in-person at the CHZC**.

Study Group

A new Zoom Study Group will begin on Thursday night, September 15, 6:45 PM–8:00 PM. We will read Jakusho Kwong's new book, *Mind Sky, Zen Teaching on Living and Dying*. Kwong Roshi was a disciple of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, and he is founder of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center. Everyone is welcome. The Zoom link is on the Event Calendar section of the CHZC website: www.chzc.org/events.htm. Please log on 5-10

minutes before the study group begins so we can start on time. *All the Study Groups are open to everyone, and there is no charge.*

Outdoor Half-day Sitting Saturday

October 1st, 6:00 AM–12:15 PM

There will be an Outdoor Half-day Sitting on Saturday, October 1, from 6:00 AM–12:15. Please bring a bag breakfast which you can either keep at your place or store in the annex refrigerator. Coffee and tea will be available on the back deck. Masks are required when indoors and when in close proximity to others on the back deck. For more information or to sign up, please email Zenki at chzc.zenki@gmail.com or Chris at ccensullo@yahoo.com. It is not necessary to participate for the entire event. If you would like to join us for only a portion of the morning, please let us know when signing up.

Eco-Dharma Group

The Chapel Hill Zen Center Eco-Dharma group informally explores together Buddhist teachings on the natural world, and caring for the natural world as an expression of the Bodhisattva Vow. Please contact Chris at ccensullo@yahoo.com or Zenki at chzc.zenki@gmail.com to be added to the CHZC Eco-Dharma mailing list.

General Meeting

The General Meeting, the annual members' business meeting, will be held on Sunday morning, **November 6, at 11:00**, by Zoom, following Zoom *zazen*. The nominees for the next Board of Directors will be introduced and the budget for 2023 will be presented. Everyone is encouraged to attend, but attendance by Participating Members is especially needed in order to reach a quorum. If you have agenda items, please contact the Board President, John Paredes at john@jollyoso.com. For the link to this meeting, please use the Zoom *Zazen* link found on the CHZC website: <http://chzc.org/events.htm>

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Rohatsu Sesshin

Friday, December 9 – Wednesday, December 14

How to include more parts of ourselves in our practice.

Led by Josho Pat Phelan

Sesshin is an intimate way to practice with ourselves and others. We begin sesshin together, we sit together, walk together, eat together, and work together. Our practice is supported by the entire universe and each of us is supporting everyone else. Sesshin will begin at **7:00 on Friday evening** with orientation and job assignments. In order to help all of us settle into the schedule and our zazen practice, **please arrive on time for orientation on Friday night.**

Following orientation, silence will be observed. The zendo will be open by 4:00 PM on Friday. It is possible to sit part of the sesshin, but please come to orientation on Friday night, and commit to sitting for at least two days. When registering, clearly explain what part of sesshin you would like to attend. The sesshin day will include zazen, beginning at 6:00 AM, kinhin, a Dharma talk, work period, and meals which may or may not use the oryoki form, and *dokusan*, an individual meeting with Josho Sensei, will be available. The day will end around 9:30 PM

Fees are \$40 per day for Participating Members, and \$50 per day for others. However if you are able to offer more, it would be very helpful; the additional funds can be considered a tax-exempt donation. There will also be an opportunity to offer a donation to the teacher. *It is our intention that no one be turned away for financial reasons, and scholarships are available.* If you would like to request a scholarship, please contact John at john@jollyoso.com. In the past, contributions received for scholarships were very helpful in allowing people to attend sesshin here and at the San Francisco Zen Center. Please return your registration form by **November 30**, with a \$40 deposit. The registration form is on page 7, and online at: www.CHZC.org/genzo-e-2022.pdf

You are welcome to sleep at the ZC, and there may be some space available in members' homes

nearby. Please bring a portable bed or pad for the floor, a sleeping bag, pillow, a towel and wash cloth, slip-on shoes, work clothes, and layered clothing. Opportunities for bathing are limited. For more information, please contact Zenki at info@chzc.org. **The Zen Center emergency phone is 919-933-0776.**

In Person Zazen

We are still in the midst of a partial opening while taking precautions due to Covid. Those who are fully vaccinated, *which includes having had a booster*, and who can wear an N95 or KN95 mask while indoors are welcome to attend zazen in person. Zazen is now being offered on **Tuesday nights** at 7:00 and 7:40 PM; and on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at 6:00 and 6:50 AM. In order to socially distance, seating is available in chairs and on every other zabuton. We hope to reopen for Sunday morning zazen later in September.

Zoom Zazen

The CHZC continues to offer zazen via Zoom on Monday and Friday afternoons from 1 to 1:40 PM; Monday through Friday mornings at 6 and 6:50 AM; and Sunday mornings at 9 and 9:50 AM. You are welcome to join both periods of zazen or either one. All times EST. The Zoom link can be found on the Event Calendar, left column: <https://chzc.org/events.htm>

Sangha News

Al-Nisa Berry moved to Leland, NC in July, while she continues to host Zoom zazen. She plans to return regularly for All-day Sittings and other in person programs. Al-Nisa has served on the CHZC Board this past year as a Member-at Large. Tripp Spivey will move in September to Pittsburgh, PA, having completed his doctorate at Duke University. This is Tripp's third year to serve as the CHZC Treasurer. Thank you both and many good wishes for life in your new homes.

Senmyo Sherman and Kris Garvin will be moving into the 5206 House as residents of the Zen Center in September to be closer to temple practice and to help care for the property.

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Inter-Faith Council for Social Services

The IFC is looking for volunteers including receptionists and Community Market (formerly known as the Food Pantry) staff (a 3-hour shift, flexible schedule), and volunteers to assist staff with linking people to options such as social services (“Community Navigation”). It is also hiring kitchen staff. More details on their website: <https://www.ifeweb.org/services/food-pantry>.

We also have an updated list of current needs since we have seen quite an increase in numbers recently at both lunch and dinner times, 60-70 for lunch and up to 40 for dinner.

The Community Market's most needed items are baked beans, dry or canned pinto beans, pork and beans, peanut and other nut butters, canned chicken, ramen, spaghetti, Mac and Cheese, other pastas, hearty soups such as Progresso, canned vegetables (except corn and green beans, which are in good supply), spaghetti sauce, canned tomato sauce & paste, canned diced & whole tomatoes, canned fruit, cooking oils & fats, butter, grits, oats-including instant packets, baking & cake mixes, cereals, juice both bottles & boxes, coffee, tea, canned milk, powdered milk packets, jelly and other condiments. Personal hygiene items are also need including soap, small tissue packs, toothpaste, toilet paper, shampoo, lotion and moisturizing creams, deodorant, razors, size 4 and 5 children's diapers. For questions, please contact Maura at maurahigh@gmail.com.

Sangha Net

The Sangha Net is a network of volunteers who can offer short-term assistance to those in the sangha in need of help due to transitions in one's life such as illness, disability, or death of a loved one. Examples of tasks can include shopping, arranging for meals, or transportation. During the pandemic, we will assist in ways that can allow for mutual safety. If you would like to volunteer or if you need assistance, please contact Kris Garvin at krisgarvin@gmail.com, Senmyo Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, or Carol Klein at carollyklein53@gmail.com.

Living with Impermanence

This is an informal discussion group sharing how we experience impermanence in our lives including life changes, illness, aging and death. We usually begin with participants sharing what they are currently thinking of or dealing with. Discussions then usually emerge spontaneously to raised concerns. Silence is frequently a response after someone shares and we trust in that silence. On occasion we've set an agenda in advance to study a topic of interest. For more information, contact Carol at carollyklein53@gmail.com, Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com, or Senmyo at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com.

Receiving the Precepts

by Josho Pat Phelan

Quite awhile ago, I read in *Newsweek* that in the field of physics the existence of what were referred to as dark energy and dark matter had been confirmed by scientists; and that this was thought to account for about 96% of the universe. Dark energy is described as the opposite of gravity, a mysterious force that's stretching the universe. Dark matter is a collective term for matter or mass which we cannot see and does not give off light. Before the existence of dark matter was discovered or agreed upon, all the objects that astrophysicists knew about had the attribute of giving off light. The idea that matter gives off light reminds me of the image in Zen for mind or consciousness as being luminous.

In Buddhism we use the word enlightenment and sometimes in Zen, “light” is used as a metaphor for True Nature or Original Face. In the 14th Century, Keizan Jokin wrote *The Record of Transmitting the Light* which is a record of the enlightenment stories of the first 52 ancestors in our lineage beginning with Shakyamuni Buddha and going through Dogen's disciple Koun Ejo. These are the names we chant in service when we chant the Names of Buddhas and Ancestors. The light that is transmitted refers to Shakyamuni Buddha's zazen as enlightenment. The translator, Francis Cook, said, “The very light within humans and living beings in general is Shakyamuni Buddha's

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zazen as enlightenment.” “It is this light that is transmitted from master to disciple as the disciple discovers this light within himself. In fact, once the light is discovered, this is the transmission.”

Kobun Chino Roshi described the essence of the precepts as light. He said, “The main subject [of *Denko-e* – the study of transmission] is how to become a transmitter of actual light, life light.” He said, “You don’t use the precepts for accomplishing your own personality, or fulfilling your dream of your highest image.... The precepts are the reflected light world of one precept, which is Buddha’s mind itself, which is the presence of Buddha.”

The *Zaike Tokudo*, or the Lay Bodhisattva Initiation Ceremony, is also called “*jukai*” in Japanese, which literally means both giving and receiving the precepts. Before we receive the precepts in a public ceremony, we first sew a *rakusu* – the small patched together piece of cloth that is worn around the neck. The *rakusu* is a small version of Buddha’s robe. Our practice is to care for it as Buddha’s robe. Shakyamuni Buddha got his clothing by gathering discarded rags, washing them, dyeing them saffron color, and then sewing them together to make his robes. The *rakusu* comes to us from this tradition.

To make a *rakusu*, we start with about a yard of fabric which we carefully measure and cut into small pieces – some of which are not much bigger than a square inch – and then we sew them back together. When I sewed my first *rakusu*, I quickly found how frustrating it can be trying to keep the corners square on these tiny pieces of fabric and to keep the strips parallel to each other. One of the teachings in Zen is “everything is mind.” I’ve never experienced this so vividly as when I was sewing a *rakusu*. At some point I realized that what was there before me wasn’t just a needle and thread and some cloth, but my state of mind. My state of mind was there facing me. My effort, intention, and concentration, my impatience, frustration, and restlessness, as well as the desire to just get it over with, were right there before me. All the ups and downs and configurations of my mind were there looking back at me. In this

process, not only do you get a *rakusu* made, but you also may get a pretty vivid experience of your state of mind. Then you wear it on your chest, and everyone else can see your *rakusu-sewing* state of mind.

One of the instructions I was given when I was sewing my *rakusu* was, with each stitch, to chant or to say silently, “*Namu kie Butsu*” which is Japanese for “Homage to Buddha,” and it is one way of taking refuge in Japanese Buddhism. So with each stitch, I said one of the refuges in English, I take refuge in Buddha, I take refuge in Dharma, I take refuge in Sangha.

This way of sewing – sitting fairly still, trying to put careful attention into each stitch, and chanting unifies body, breath and mind and brings forth a concentrated state. The process of sewing the *rakusu* is a meditation practice itself. Through the sewing and chanting, we embody the refuges, we bring Buddha’s teaching into our bodies. I think of this as the first initiation.

The precepts ceremony is another initiation. We begin by chanting the names of Buddha – Buddhas with different predominating characteristics – in order to call them forth, to invite them to be present. These Buddhas we are calling forth are not something outside us.

Next is repentance and purification in which we acknowledge our endless delusion, the endless karma created through the actions of our body, speech, and mind. The repentance verse is, *All my ancient, twisted karma, from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion, born through body, speech, and mind, I now fully atone.*

Then we are given the precepts. The Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts are made up of the Three Refuges, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Clear Mind Precepts. One of the meanings of refuge is to unreservedly throw oneself into. Sometimes it is said that as a child leaps into its father’s arms, we should unreservedly throw ourselves into Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. One way to talk about Buddha is unconditioned nature, i.e. to be unconditioned by greed, hate or delusion. This is our true self. Dharma means both the path back to our true self or the

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teaching of how to come back; and Sangha means the people we practice with as well as all people, all beings, all things, actually everything that exists or has existed or will exist. This totality is our field of practice.

The Three Pure Precepts are given next. We use the translation:

I vow to refrain from all action that creates attachment.

I vow to make every effort to live in enlightenment.

I vow to live and to be lived for the benefit all beings.

Suzuki Roshi translated these as:

With purity of heart, I vow to refrain from ignorance.

With purity of heart, I vow to reveal beginner's mind.

With purity of heart, I vow to live and be lived for the benefit of all beings.

Three Refuges act as an inspiration for taking the Three Pure Precepts, and together the Refuges and the Pure Precepts prepare us for taking the Clear-Mind Precepts which are also referred to as the Ten Wholesome Paths. The essence of the precepts is non-harming. To practice with the precepts, look at what you are doing; in this moment are your actions creating suffering? Are your actions harming yourself or others? Or, are you actions in accord with your deepest intention?

During the ceremony, the ordainees are asked, "Will you receive these precepts?" and a little later they are asked, "Will you continuously observe them?" or "Will you maintain them well?" In reference to the precepts, Maezumi Roshi said, "...there is nothing to be defiled, nothing to be maintained; yet, because we are constantly creating separation, through our body, speech, and mind, there is something to defile, something to maintain.... When we are given the precepts, we aren't given something that exists outside ourselves.." In receiving the *kai* [precepts], we reveal our life as the very body, form, and functioning of the enlightened state itself."

The Sanskrit word used that is often translated as precepts is *sila*, and it is derived from the word

meaning to exercise or practice. So we don't take these precepts once and get it over with. Our practice with these vows and precepts is like a continuous maintenance job, like house-cleaning or trash collection. You may not notice how much you depend on the trash collectors until they stop coming. Likewise you may not recognize your effort in maintaining the precepts until there is a breakdown somewhere in the system. In *Returning to Silence*, Katagiri Roshi said that *sila* means to form a habit. "Forming a habit of living in a way that is based on Buddha's teaching is...called vow....We have to put this vow into practice in our everyday life.... Every day, constantly, we have to form the habit of living in the way that is based on Buddha's teaching. The deep meaning of precept is that it is Buddha-nature or Truth." He said, "To receive the precepts is to awaken to Buddha-nature. Even though we don't understand what Buddha-nature or truth is, to receive the precepts is awareness."

Our commitment to the precepts, to these vows, is rooted in our commitment to awakening. By maintaining our intention to understand what the precepts are, moment after moment, by being open to them over and over again, the gap between our lives and the precepts closes until the living of our lives is itself an expression of the precepts, a manifestation of awareness.

Ordination is a little like an intentional rebirth. When people are ordained, they receive a new name, lineage papers which show their new family and ancestors, and new clothes. Priests receive a new set of robes as well as Buddha's robe or *okesa*. Before the ceremony, the ordainees bathe and put on either new or clean clothes and underwear. I suspect these guidelines originated from a time when people didn't have the opportunity to bathe as easily as we do now. Priest ordination is called *Shukke Tokudo* which means home departure or leaving home and accomplishing the Way, whereas Lay Ordination is staying home and accomplishing the Way.

Although each ordainees sews their own *rakusu* or Buddha's robe, when it is finished, it is given to the preceptor, the person who is giving the precepts. During the ceremony, the ordainees

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are given a new name. The name may be based on the ordainee's character or present practice or his or her intention or potential for practice. This name is written on the silk lining of the *rakusu* which is given during the ceremony. So although we sew the *rakusu*, it is not ours until it is given to us. This is also true when you sew a second *rakusu* or if someone sews a *rakusu* for you. In this lineage when you sew Buddha's robe, you don't put it on and start wearing it right away, you give it to a teacher to give to you. This process recognizes our interconnection, the importance of having a teaching, a group, and a teacher to practice with. So, we don't go off by ourselves to get enlightened, we practice with others, for the benefit of all beings.

In addition to receiving a new name and a new robe, we are given lineage papers called *Kechi Myaku* which means blood vein, and the blood vein is the blood line of our Dharma ancestors. The blood vein is indicated by a red line that begins at the top of the lineage paper with a circle symbolizing the emptiness out of which all Buddhas come.

The red line or blood vein goes from emptiness to Shakyamuni Buddha's name, then to his disciple, Mahakashyapa's name, and it continues through the names of each teacher and disciple through our ancestors in India and China to Dogen who brought Soto Zen to Japan and eventually to Suzuki Roshi who brought this lineage to America, then to Hakuryu Sojun Mel Weitsman, who is my teacher, through my name and to the new ordainee whose Buddhist name is added at the end of the list. The blood vein comes out of the feet of the new disciple at the bottom of the page and returns to the circle of emptiness at the top of the page. The ordainees are both the newest disciples and they connect directly to the emptiness from which all Buddhas come, so the blood vein has no beginning or end.

Katagiri Roshi said, "The main purpose of Buddhism is to form the habit of practice as a vow forever....It is like walking in a mist. We don't know what the mist is, we don't know where we are walking or why; all we have to do is just walk. This is buddha's practice."

Not knowing "where we are walking or why" may not seem like good advice for working with the precepts, but what I appreciate in this is the way it leads away from the literal meaning of the precepts which is so easy to conceptualize as good or bad behavior, and instead Katagiri Roshi directs us toward the unknown, beyond our thinking and our ideas of how we should be. Having a ceremony directed to something unknown pushes us beyond the limits of the material world, beyond our conceptualized world, that we think we understand and can control. Our work in Zen, including with the precepts, is to push beyond the limits of what we know through our thinking and to learn to trust something else, something wider.

In the book, *Living Beautifully with Uncertainty and Change*, Pema Chodron wrote about the precepts this way, "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, [and so on]... 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 [or maybe difficult feelings] it triggers is inner renunciation."

So, we begin by looking at the precepts and what being true to them might mean on a literal level. And this becomes a doorway to getting in touch with ourselves on a deeper, more fundamental level. And connecting with this more fundamental level strangely enough leads to selflessness or the mind of Buddha.

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Rohatsu Sesshin Registration Form

December 9 - 14, 2022 — Registration Due November 30
Chapel Hill Zen Center PO Box 16302, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Emergency contact person: Name _____ Phone _____

Liability waiver: *prior to sesshin, you will be required to be sign a waiver whereby you release the Zen Center from any liability for accident or injury, and agree not to sue. You may request a copy of the form in advance.* Do you have a **medical condition** (e.g., diabetes, heart condition, pregnancy) or **dietary restrictions**? If so, please attach a short statement of explanation:

I need a chair for zazen Yes

I have an oryoki I can bring Yes No

I plan to arrive at _____ on _____ I plan to leave at _____ on _____

I can help set up (4:00 P.M.—6:00 P.M.) I can help clean up

I have enclosed my deposit/sitting fees \$ _____

I would like to donate toward a scholarship fund \$ _____

Checks payable to
Chapel Hill Zen Center
P.O. Box 16302
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

If this is your first sesshin with the Chapel Hill Zen Center, please attach a short statement about your zazen practice and history: How long have you been sitting zazen? How often are your currently sitting? Have you sat a one-day sitting or longer sesshin before? If so, when and with whom?

Do you have room in your home for someone from out of town to stay? Yes No

Where do you plan to sleep?

Chapel Hill Zen Center



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

Zoom Schedule

<i>Sunday Morning</i>	<i>Monday to Friday</i>
9:00 zazen	6:00 A.M. zazen
9:40 kinhin	6:50 A.M. zazen
9:50 zazen	<i>Monday & Friday</i>
10:20 service	1:00 P.M. zazen

In-Person Schedule

<i>Mon, Wed & Fri</i>	<i>Tues Evening</i>
6:00 A.M. zazen	7:00 P.M. zazen
6:50 A.M. zazen	7:50 P.M. zazen

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

Joshō Pat Phelan, Abbess

Nonprofit Organization
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*My heart is like the autumn moon
Shining clean and clear in the green pool.
No, that's not a good comparison.
Tell me how shall I explain?*

Hanshan, (*Cold Mountain*, 9th century)

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.