



Holidays

The Zen Center will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 4, and for Thanksgiving on Thursday and Friday, November 23 and 24. There will be no Study Group meeting on September 4, or on November 23. On Monday, Sept 4, and Friday, November 24, 1:00 pm Zoom zazen will not be held. Morning Zoom zazen may occur as usual on these dates.

Vice Abbess Installation

Sunday, September 17

I am so pleased to announce that Zenki Kathleen Batson will be installed as Vice Abbess after zazen on Sunday morning, September 17, followed by a reception. Everyone is warmly invited and encouraged to attend.

Many bows,

Joshō

Dharma Talks

Joshō Pat Phelan on Sunday morning, September 10, at 10:30.

Zenki Kathleen Batson on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday mornings, September 30, October 1 and 2, at 10:30.

Jakuko Mo Ferrell on Sunday morning, November 5, at 10:30.

Fall Sesshin

September 29-October 2, led by Zenki Kathleen Batson. Please see pages 6 and 7 for more information.

Rohatsu Sesshin

Led by Joshō Pat Phelan

Friday evening, December 1, through Friday afternoon, December 8. For more information and to download the Registration Form, see www.chzc.org/events.htm#rohatsu.

Zachariah Hallock

June 27, 1942 - July 16, 2023

Our sangha member, Zack Hallock left the world on Sunday, July 16, in his home after being diagnosed with myelodysplasia several months ago. Zack regularly attended Tuesday evening zazen for many years, was also a steady participant in the Study Groups, and brought his mowing equipment to mow the meadows at the Zen Center's 5206 property.

Zack was a physical oceanographer who studied the behavior of oceans. During his career with various federal government research agencies, he frequently worked with ship crews on research trips around the world. Zack and the other scientists would place giant instruments on the ocean floor, to be rechecked in a year's time. Zack was trained to analyze the data that came from measuring the ocean's temperatures, tides, and currents.

Curtis Fabens, Daishī Zenkaī

Great Resolve, Complete Openness

Our former sangha member, Curtis Fabens, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, August 10. He began practicing at the CHZC in 2006, after visiting Tassajara during the summer. Curtis served as a conscientious Work Leader before he returned to Tassajara Zen Mountain Center to begin his monastic training in 2010. He was ordained as a priest at Tassajara and received Dharma Transmission at Berkeley Zen Center from Zenshin Greg Fain, on the evening of Friday, June 28, 2023. Curtis is survived by his wife, Caitlyn, and their seven-year-old daughter.

Outdoor Half-day Sitting

Sponsored by the Eco-Dharma Group

Saturday, October 14, 6:00 AM - 12:15 PM

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. 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

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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.

Half-day Sitting

Sunday morning, November 5

There will be an in person Half-day Sitting from 6:00 AM until 12:15 PM, on Sunday morning, November 5. Orientation will be on **Saturday night at 7:30**, and includes instruction in the formal oryoki zendo meal. The day will include zazen and a Dharma Talk, as well as breakfast. **Please speak to Josho Sensei if this is your first half-day sitting.** The suggested donation is \$10 for members, and \$15 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 Wednesday at info@chzc.org.** For more information on the oryoki meal form see: <https://kannondo.org/getting-started/oryoki/>

Beginning Zen Practice

A Class with David Guy

October 9-November 13, Monday, 7:30-9:00 PM

Zen Meditation, or *zazen*, is the simple practice of being present with our experience. We hear the instructions in a matter of minutes, but spend a lifetime learning the practice. These six classes will introduce participants to meditation and give them support as they develop a daily sitting practice. It will also introduce them to other aspects of practice at the Zen Center.

We will begin on the first night with meditation instructions and a short period of sitting. Each week we will continue to sit for a period at the beginning of class, gradually increasing the time. Participants will have a chance to ask questions and raise concerns about their practice. As the weeks proceed we will study other aspects of Zen practice, including walking meditation, protocol around the zendo, and the service of bowing and chanting. But the focus will be on zazen, and participants' actual practice as it unfolds. The content of the class will emerge from partici-

pants' questions and concerns. Those who attend must be vaccinated, which includes having a booster. Masks are optional, but may be required if the spread of Covid worsens.

The cost will be \$60, payable the first night, and will be contributed to the Zen Center. Partial scholarships are available. For more information, or to sign up, please contact David Guy at 919-641-9277 or David@CHZC.org.

David Guy has been practicing meditation since 1991, and regularly gives Zen meditation instruction at the Chapel Hill Zen Center. He has co-authored two books with Larry Rosenberg of the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center, *Breath by Breath: The Liberating Practice of Insight Meditation* and *Living in the Light of Death: On the Art of Being Truly Alive*, and is author of two novels with Buddhist themes. David's Blog is at www.davidguy.org

Annual Business Meeting

Sunday morning, November 12

The General Meeting, our annual members' business meeting, will be held on Sunday morning, November 12, after morning service. The nominees for the next Board of Directors will be introduced and the budget for 2024 will be presented. Everyone is encouraged to attend, but only Participating Members are eligible to vote. If you have agenda items, please contact the Board President, John Paredes at john@jollyoso.com

Study Groups via Zoom

A New Study Group Begins

Just to sit and be open to whatever comes up is zazen. If we can do that with every breath, without even thinking about it, resiliency is cultivated. Zazen is the actualization of availability, openness, and resiliency.

--- Tim Burkett

Thursday night, September 7, 6:45-8:00

For this weekly study group, we will read and discuss selections of Tim Burkett's book, *Nothing Holy About It, The Zen of Being Just Who You Are*.

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Monday evenings, 5:30 to 6:30 PM

In this Study Group, we are reading the Yogacara sutra, the *Samdhinirmocana Sutra*, primarily the translation of John Powers, titled *The Wisdom of Buddha*, which includes lots of footnotes.

For more information, and for links to purchase a hardcover copy or download a PDF of *The Wisdom of Buddha*, see www.chzc.org/events.htm#study.

Reb Anderson's book, *The Third Turning of the Wheel*, discusses this sutra and refers to lines from the Powers translation by page numbers.

Everyone is welcome and there is no charge. Please log on 5-10 minutes before the study group begins so we can start on time.

Joining the Zoom Study Group

Via computer: www.zoom.us/j/821378615

Via phone: (646) 558-8656

Meeting ID: 821378615

Sejiki Ceremony

Saturday evening October 28, at 7:00

This year the *Sejiki* Ceremony will be held on **October 28, at 7:00**. Children are welcome, and welcome to wear costumes. And we invite you to help decorate the entry garden and deck with your Jack-o-Lanterns!

“*Sejiki*” is a Japanese word meaning “feeding the hungry ghosts.” Hungry ghosts are depicted as beings with very large stomachs swollen from malnutrition, who have the tiniest of throats, and who are always hungry. They are symbolic of the state of mind which is never satisfied with who we are or what we have. In the ceremony we call forth hungry ghosts and beings who are stuck in intermediary states, as well the dark, unknown regions of our own psyches, bringing them into the light. We offer them the nourishment of Dharma

with the hope of satisfying and releasing them.

The *Sejiki* Ceremony also has the feeling of a universal memorial service. In addition to releasing the spirits of the departed, the ceremony is intended to resolve our karmic relationships with the deceased. During the ceremony, the names of those for whom we have performed memorial services during the past year will be read. If you would like the name of a friend or relative, or other being read during the service, please leave the name in an envelop on the zendo bulletin board, or send it to info@chzc.org no later than the day before the ceremony.

In the spirit of Sejiki, we invite you to bring a food offering for the Interfaith Council pantry of non-perishable goods, which will be collected in the entryway.



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Virtual Peer Group Meetings

The Zen Center Virtual Peer Group sessions meet monthly on the Second Wednesday of the month, at 7 PM, on September 13, and October 11. They are coordinated by Al-Nisa Berry and Maura High. These Zoom meetings will give sangha members an opportunity to share their individual experiences, receive encouragement, and offer compassion in a safe, supportive environment. Our goal is to build a thriving virtual community based on Soto Zen principles and help one another deepen our practice in daily life. For more information, please contact Al-Nisa Berry at alnisa.berry@gmail.com or Maura High at maurahigh@gmail.com.

Living with Impermanence

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. For more information, contact Carol at carollyklein53@gmail.com or Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com.

Sangha Net

The Sangha Net is a network of volunteers who offer short-term assistance to those in the sangha in need of help due to transitions in life such as illness, disability, or death of a loved one. Examples of tasks include shopping, arranging for meals, or transportation. 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.

Daily Dogen

Daily Dogen is a Google Group that sends a short passage from Master Dogen's teaching every day by email. Over the course of 2023-2024, the plan is to email the entire *Shobogenzo*. If you would like to join, go to <https://groups.google.com/g/daily-dogen> and click: Ask to Join Group. Your email will not be shared or used for any other purpose, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Zoom Zazen

Monday and Friday afternoons, 1 to 1:40 PM

Monday through Friday mornings at 6 and 6:50 AM

The CHZC continues to offer zazen via Zoom. You are welcome to join both periods of zazen or either one. All times EST.

Joining Zoom Zazen

Via computer: www.zoom.us/j/85659804526

Via phone: (646) 558-8656

Meeting ID: 85659804526

Chapel Hill Zen Center Board of Directors

President, John Paredes; Vice President Chris Censullo; Secretary, Danielle Bouchard; Treasurer, Ken Wilson; Members-at-Large, Al-Nisa Berry and Lance Ashdown.

Donations

If you would like to support the Chapel Hill Zen Center through a monetary donation, please mail checks to: P.O. Box 16302, Chapel Hill, NC 27516; or make a donation through MoonClerk at: www.chzc.org/donate.htm

Not-knowing

by Josho Pat Phelan

I'd like to talk about a characteristic of zazen practice, as I understand it. We might say that the journey of Zen practice is going from knowing to not-knowing. Our usual process is to conceptualize who we are and how we fit into the world and then hold onto and protect this conceptualization or self identity. In practice, we move toward letting go of our conceptualizations, letting go of our need to hold our world and our personality in place. The activity of practice is *independent* from our conceptualizations or from the story which we are constantly telling our-selves.

This story can take the form of a commentary or inner dialogue or writing an imaginary letter to someone inside our heads in which we explain what is going on, adding our own comments. I've heard this described as the story of me, written by me, directed by me, starring me and... heard by me. The problem with this is that the storyline we are churning out replaces our real life. So, the story or commentary becomes a kind of insulation between us and our direct experience, here and now, and it functions by mediating our experience, so we're never quite in sync with our actual experience as it is happening.

Sometimes I feel like I spend a lot of my life trying to figure out a strategy for how to do all the things I want to do or have to do. A lot of my time seems filled with one project after another, trying to squeeze in as much as I can in between buying groceries, doing the laundry, and getting something ready for dinner. But in zazen, or Zen meditation, we don't need the mind that measures and tracks thinking stops, where we are no longer interested in "figuring it out." The place where we meet the limits of our thinking is where we begin to trust. We all existed before we could think – so you could say, we are older than our thinking is. Before we could figure things out, we were eating and swallowing, breathing and smiling, and feeling warm and comfortable or not and expressing it.

Practice can't be engineered or directed by our conceptual thinking. When we direct our practice with our thinking, we are practicing figuring things out, not Zen. When this happens, what we think of as practice is being limited by our conceptualization process, and our practice becomes just another one of the stories we tell ourselves. To be free from conceptualization or rationalization, we need to trust something wider than our thinking. It has been said that the answer or the experience of koans is found in our muscles. Rakan said, "That which doesn't know is most intimate."

In Zen literature, the image of darkness is often used to refer to enlightenment or the non-dual realm that exists before separation, differentiation, or discrimination arise. This realm of darkness is beyond our conceptualized world where we *think* we understand what is going on, where we track, and measure, and plot our strategy for making our way through life.

Whereas the image of light often refers to the discriminating, differentiating capacity of consciousness. Sitting zazen is a way we can begin to let go of the way we grasp – the way we try to pin things down and control our experience. To really practice Zen, eventually we need to put down our strategies, our expectations and goals, and allow ourselves to trust something beyond our thinking.

A metaphor for Zen practice is walking on a stone path in the dark, where there is a single stone for each footstep. Just walking and trusting each foot to find the next stone, trusting the intention that brings us to practice. Without knowing what comes next, just step forward, trusting this unknown realm of darkness.

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Fall Sesshin

Friday, September 29 – Monday, October 2

Practicing with Water

Led by Zenki Kathleen Batson

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. In this sesshin, we will explore the theme of water in some of Dogen's writings, consider what stories we tell ourselves about water, and how to engage with water as part of our practice in daily life.

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, we will observe silence.

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 Zenki Sensei, will be available. The day will end around 9:30 PM

Fees are \$50 per day for Participating Members, and \$60 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 and let him know how much you are able to afford. 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 **September 22**, with a \$50 deposit. **The registration form is on page 7, and online at: www.chzc.org/2023-fall-sesshin-registration.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. Camping on the ZC grounds is also available. Opportunities for bathing are limited. For more information, please contact Zenki at info@chzc.org.

Zen Center emergency phone is 919-933-0776.



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Three-day Sesshin Registration Form

Friday, September 29 to Monday, October 2— Registration Due September 19
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 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)? If so, please attach a short statement of explanation.

I have an allergy or food restriction Yes List allergy & severity _____

I need a chair for zazen Part time Full time

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 you 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

In-Person Schedule

Mon, Wed & Fri

Tues Evening

6:00 A.M. zazen

7:00 P.M. zazen

6:50 A.M. zazen

7:50 P.M. zazen

Sunday Morning

9:00 zazen

9:40 kinhin

9:50 zazen

10:20 service

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

Joshō Pat Phelan, Abbess

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Night

A sliver of moon lulls through clear night.

Half abandoned to sleep, lampwicks char.

*Deer wander, uneasy among howling peaks,
and forests of falling leaves startle cicadas.*

*I remember mince treats east of the river,
think of our boat adrift in falling snow*

*Tribal songs rise, rifling the stars. Here,
at the edge of heaven, I inhabit my absence.*

— Tu Fu (from *The Way of Ch'an* by David Hinton)

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.