



Holiday Closures

The Zen Center will be closed on Memorial Day, **Monday, May 27**; and on **Thursday and Friday, July 4 and 5**.

Spring Sesshin: May 17-22

Led by Josho Pat Phelan

For more information and a registration form, see the Event Calendar: <https://chzc.org/events.htm#sesshin>

June Practice Intensive

Sundays, June 2-June 30

See pages 6 and 7 for more information and to register.

Way-seeking Mind Talks

Tim Hinton, Danielle Bouchard, Jill Kuhlberg, and Lance Ashdown will give talks about their path to Zen practice, on Tuesday nights in June at 7:45, after one period of zazen. Everyone is welcome.

Dharma Talks

Josho Pat Phelan will give a Dharma talk each morning of the May Sesshin, May 18-22, at 10:30, which, along with the two periods of zazen before, at 9:00 and 9:50, are open to the public. ***Tuesday evening zazen will begin at 8:00 pm on May 21 due to the May Sesshin.***

Dharma Talks will be given at 10:30, on Sunday mornings, June 16, by Josho Pat Phelan, and on June 23, by Zenki K. Batson.

All-Day Sittings, June 23 and July 21.

All-day Sittings are scheduled for Sunday, June 23, and July 21, from 6:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Orientations will be on the Saturday night prior at 7:30, and includes instruction in the meal form. The day includes zazen, a Dharma Talk, Dokusan, and a work period, as well as breakfast and lunch. ***It is alright to sit half of the day, but please sign up in advance, and please speak to Josho Roshi or Zenki if this is your first All-day***

Sitting. 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 the 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 at info@chzc.org or on the clipboard in the entryway. For more information on the oryoki meal form see: <https://kannondo.org/getting-started/oryoki/>

Juneteenth

We will have two special short services on June 19 at 7:20 A.M. and 6:40 P.M. to commemorate Juneteenth and recommit ourselves to a just and equitable society. This service is an opportunity to reflect on how far our nation has come, and how much further there is to go.

Baikaryu Eisanka Introductory Session

Saturday, May 25, 10 am-Noon

Baikaryu Eisanka is the practice of singing Japanese Soto Zen Buddhist hymns with bell accompaniment. Inspired by the *Baikaryu Eisanka* Workshop given at the CHZC by Rev. Hoko Karnegis last July, we have acquired three bell sets. With the hopes of offering *Baikaryu Eisanka* practice, we will have an introductory session on Saturday, May 25. Please contact Chris at ceensullo@yahoo.com or Zenki at chzc.zenki@gmail.com, or sign up at the bulletin board if you are interested in attending. For more information about *Baikaryu Eisanka*, see: www.sotozen.com

Workday at 5206

Saturday Afternoon, May 11, 2-5 PM

Come enjoy the company of other sangha members as we do outdoor work at the Zen Center's property at 5206 Highway 86, just north of the Zen Center. Please bring work gloves if you have them. For more information, contact Maura High at maurahigh@gmail.com.

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Myriad Things Come Forth

Saturday morning, June 8, 8-10 AM

With Eden Kevin Heffernan

This workshop will be an opportunity to open to the more-than-human world with a period of outdoor zazen; a guided sensory invitation to the sights, sounds, and textures of the myriad beings dwelling on Red Cedar Mountain; and conclude with a brief introduction to the natural (forests and fires) and human (First Peoples and colonists) history of the Piedmont eco-region to understand the many fibers and threads of our place. The workshop will be led by Rev. Eden Heffernan, who leads Richmond Zen, and who has practiced conservation biology and Zen in the Mid-Atlantic for over 30 years.

Study Groups via Zoom

Seeing One Thing Through, The Zen Life and Teachings of Sojun Mel Weitsman

Thursday nights, 7 to 8 PM, June 6 - 27

For the June Practice Intensive, Zenki Batson will lead this Study Group reading and discussing selected talks by Sojun Roshi. Open to everyone. Copies are for sale at the Zen Center.

Monday evening, 5:30 to 6:30 PM

The Monday evening Study Group will continue studying the Yogacara text, the *Samdhinirmocana Sutra*, translated by John Powers, titled *The Wisdom of Buddha*, and Reb Anderson's book, *The Third Turning of the Wheel*.

Precepts Study Group

Sunday Afternoons from 4:30 to 5:30 PM

Jakuko Mo Ferrell is leading a Precepts Study Group at 4:30-5:30 PM on most Sunday afternoons. We are reading *Waking Up to What You Do: A Zen Practice for Meeting Every Situation with Intelligence and Compassion* by Diane Eshin Rizzetto as well as looking at supplemental materials. This book can be purchased at the Zen Center, or online from Bookshop.org. Used copies are available at Alibris.org. Contact Jakuko Mo Ferrell at mositwear@gmail.com for questions and updates.

Everyone is welcome and there is no charge. *All Study Groups use the same Zoom link, See: www.chzc.org/events.htm#study*

Looking Ahead

You Have to Say Something: Maura High will offer a place-based poetry workshop on, July 27, 9 AM-noon

August Sesshin: Zenki Kathleen Batson will lead a 3-day sesshin, Friday, August 23 - Monday, August 26.

December Sesshin: We are planning to have a 7-day sesshin December 6-13.

Library Acquisitions

Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey, Kenneth K. S. Ch'en; *No Birth, No Death: Essays, Poetry and Calligraphy*, Reverend Nonin Chowaney; *Three Zen Masters: Ikkyu, Hakuin, and Ryokan*, John Stevens.

Volunteer Opportunity – Flower Arranging

We would like to have more volunteers to create flower arrangements for the ZC altars. This is a wonderful way to support the ongoing practice at the Center. If you are interested in training to serve as a flower arranger about once a month, please contact Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com

Peer Group by Zoom

Upcoming Meetings Wednesdays 7 pm, May 8 & June 12

Please join us in sharing your thoughts, challenges, and successes with other sangha members

For more information, please contact Al-Nisa Berry at alnisa.berry@gmail.com or Maura High at maurahigh@gmail.com.

Living with Impermanence

The next Zoom gathering will be April 21. Please contact Carol at carollyklein53@gmail.com or Kris at krisgarvin@gmail.com, if you would like more information. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age.

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Sangha Net

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 need assistance, please contact Kris Garvin at krisgarvin@gmail.com, Senmyo Jeff Sherman at jeffsherman3333@gmail.com, or Carol Klein at carollyklein53@gmail.com.

Sesshin Water Talk, Part 3

by Zenki K. Batson

Yesterday we considered some of the many places we find water in the teachings. We can also find water in our ceremonies and daily monastic practices. For this sesshin, we have had a water offering on the altar. I have been putting water into the offering bowl each morning and emptying it at night, offering it to outdoor plants before I go to bed. As is our tradition, I pour the water towards me, bowing before and after I return it to the universe.

We don't generally have a water offering here but many Zen centers do. When I visited Sanshin, founded by Rev. Shohaku Okumura, I noticed that they had water offerings on their altars. I also noticed water offerings at the Durham Shambhala Center of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. They had several small dishes of water lined up along the front edge of their altar. Sanshin has one water offering on each altar. In speaking to Rev. Hoko Karnegis who trained in Japan, I learned that in Japan many temples have an altar devoted to a nearby important river. Offerings on the altar go back to the way a traveler or guest was welcomed in India, which is appropriate when invoking Buddhas. The water was either for drinking or washing, the candle-light to see by, the food to eat, etc. She said that when this practice moved to Japan it took on a different meaning. What's on an altar expresses the freshness of our moment-to-moment practice and the impermanence of things like flowers.

Buddhism takes on qualities of whatever culture it enters. In Japan, the practices of *jundM´* often known as Shintoism, existed when Buddhism arrived. Shinto is a term commonly used by people outside of Japan to describe a custom of entreating and celebrating a variety of *kami*. *Kami* are the spirits or forces of nature and exist in all things. *Kami* are almost always associated with specific places. As early as the 9th century a theory emerged in Japanese Buddhist thought that *kami* were incarnations of Buddhist deities. Other theories were that Buddhist deities were *kami* from lands outside of Japan. Since the 10th century, the most common arrangement in Japan for sacred sites was to have Buddhist figures and *Kami* venerated side by side. A Japanese friend told me that in her childhood it was not always clear whether a tradition or ceremony was Shinto or Buddhist and this is not really a problem for most people there. I have also read that in Japan, Benzaiten is the Goddess of all that flows: water, music, arts, love, wisdom, wealth, and fortune. She originated in Hinduism, evolved into Shintoism, and then into Buddhism. This historical-cultural context and the quality of attention towards nature in Japanese culture helps us understand how Indian Buddhism evolved to have such a focus on nature in the Zen teachings passed on to us here in the U.S. today. For some Americans, it feels foreign, and for some of us, it feels like coming home.

In many of our ceremonies, we have *Shasui* or Wisdom Water with which the officiating priest purifies the room. When a priest receives Dharma Transmission, they learn the specific secret mantras and actions that accompany wisdom water in a ceremony. It is always polite to *gassho* bow when the Doshi is sprinkling the wisdom water towards you.

The *shasui* water is wisdom water. It is also tap water from the back bathroom sink. It is also wisdom water! In my mind this represents how this world is the world of samsara and also at exactly the same time the world of nirvana. Wisdom water and bathroom sink water. The mundane day-to-day world is where we live. It is also where Buddha is. Does the officiating priest

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transform the water from tap to wisdom, or does the priest only transform their view of the water, and how they engage with it? Or both? Or neither? Or all the above? I don't think it can be articulated. In his book *Mind Sky*, Jakusho Kwong shares the story of early Buddhism in which a group of Buddha's disciples go to bathe at a communal bath. When the disciples touched the water they really touched the water and the water touched them. "And because of its wondrous touch, their realization was actualized in that moment." Kwong Roshi asks, "Does anyone touch water these days? The water touches us, but we just use water. We use it, we gulp it down, we consume it the way we consume everything. But – touching the water, you know...have you ever really touched water?" He concludes by saying, "I'll bet you haven't truly touched it since you were a baby!"

When I read this I felt sad and offended. Of course, I truly touch water! That is our practice, isn't it? That he was asking caused me to wonder if perhaps my practice is different from other people's way of practicing. "Water isn't just for drinking or washing. Water has its own spirit. Water is alive. Water has memory. Water knows how you treat it, water knows you. You should get to know water too." Said Wabinoquay Otsoquaykwan an Anishinaabe elder. This feels true to me.

If you use the bathroom in the annex you have seen the verse on the wall where we hang our rakusu and okesa, "With all beings, I wash body and mind, Pure and shining within and without." When we hang our rakusu or okesa there, we read this verse and bow to Buddha's robes before entering the bathroom. We bow when we return before putting it back on. At the San Francisco Zen Center monasteries, there is always a place outside of the bath area to offer incense and do bows before going in to bathe. This small verse by the bathroom in the annex is known as a *gatha*. *Gathas* are short verses that remind us to return our attention to the present. It is traditional in monastic practice to have *gathas* to accompany various activities. In the book, *Practices at a Zen Monastery*, a Soto Zen manual, many *gathas* are

listed. They accompany activities like brushing our teeth, using the toilet, and washing our hands. Two of the *gathas* when using water in a toilet are: "As we use the toilet, may all sentient beings eliminate defilement, removing greed anger and ignorance." And "As we cleanse defilement with water, may all sentient beings enter into the pure nature of patience, achieving undefilement."

Once I read a series of comments by foreign travelers in the United States about things they found odd about life here. One commonly repeated oddity was how much clean fresh water we Americans use each time we flush away our urine and feces. It's enough to make a pot of soup! Can we see the water in our toilets in a new way? The Soto *gatha* for washing hands is: "As we wash the hands with water, may all sentient beings acquire supremely subtle hands, with which to hold the Buddha Dharma." I love this one since as we explored in the talk yesterday, ultimately everything we touch expresses the truth of existence. It is suchness and is therefore expressing the Dharma to us if we are truly paying attention. It is the Zen tradition to use poetic verses to return us to our current activity. You don't have to use the ones written out in *Practices at a Zen Monastery* or in the *Eihei Shingi*. You can compose your own *gathas* for the specific activities of your own life. In practicing with *gathas*, we ritualize the process of bringing our attention to what is really occurring. We change our habit energy from that of distraction and disinterest to one of awareness and appreciation. We change the story, and the way we narrate our lives. In the book *Practices at a Zen Monastery* we read that Dogen said, "The way of the bath in the Soto Tradition does not permit us to use water carelessly." It is said that whenever Dogen Zenji drew water in a dipper from the river he only used half and returned the other half without wasting it. He said, "May this water bring blessings to 100 billion people after me," as he did this. At Eihei-ji there is a bridge called *Hanshaku-kyo*, Half Dipper bridge. It is our tradition to care for water and to always pour water out towards and not away from ourselves as we do during the oryoki meal.

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Suzuki Roshi said, “This expresses respect for water. This kind of practice is not based on any idea of being economical. It may be difficult to understand why Dogen returned half the water to the river. This kind of practice is beyond our thinking. When we feel the beauty of the water, we intuitively do it Dogen’s way. It is our true nature to do so. But if your true nature is covered by ideas of economy or efficiency, Dogen’s way makes no sense.”

We don’t care for water to make the world a better place, or to be good people. We care for and respect water because it is our true nature to do so. When I was at Mt. Equity, Dai-En Bennage Roshi’s Center, I saw a sign above the sink that said, “May we use this water with awareness and for the benefit of all beings.” In *Tenzo Kyokun*, Dogen explains that when we rinse the rice we should keep the rinse water for gruel, “Not wastefully discarding it.” He also says: “When you prepare food, never view the ingredients from some commonly held perspective, nor think about them only with your emotions. Maintain an attitude that tries to build great temples from ordinary greens, that expounds the Buddhadharma through the most trivial activity...Handle even a single leaf of green in such a way that it manifests the body of Buddha. This in turn allows the Buddha to manifest through the leaf. This is a power which you cannot grasp with your rational mind.” We can also handle water this way. After we eat our meals we pour out the water with which we wash our bowls towards us as an offering to the various spirits to satisfy them. It’s not a figure of speech or something quaint. It is real. We are making an offering and we are remembering that it tastes like ambrosia – “Food of the Gods.” After we bow to the server, we then drink the very last drop. In this way, we remind ourselves of its preciousness – even though it is plentiful every single drop matters.

71% of the earth’s surface is covered with water. Water is in the ground and in the atmosphere. It is within every living being. When we consider this, water expresses for us the truth of no inside and no outside. In the water cycle, water is never

idle. Water moves from one place to another, and changes from one form to the other. Water poetically reminds us of the flow of the world. And technically water is the flowing of us and of the world. Water as a unified entity is vast and all-encompassing. Each time it flows from a faucet it can bring us immediately back to this truth, the vastness of this life experience, and the vastness of this moment. Dainin Katagiri Roshi said, “If we open ourselves completely, consciously or unconsciously we are ready to listen to the voiceless voice of the universe.” If water running in a stream is the long broad tongue of the Buddha, is the Buddha not also speaking in our sinks and our toilets? Our tradition has so many beautiful poetic examples of the various states of water as metaphors for impermanence, interconnectedness, suchness, of the ephemeral inexpressible nature of everything, for life itself. At the very same time, water in its various states IS these things, it is a phenomenal example of these truths of interconnectedness, impermanence, and suchness. If we are truly present when engaging with water we can awaken to these truths. Because we can do this throughout our day each day with relative ease and assurance that water will be available to us, we can also awaken to our own incredibly good fortune, feel deep gratitude, and be inspired to live in a way that expresses this gratitude. In this way, water can directly guide us on the bodhisattva path. On the Soto Shu Website, the official website of the Soto Zen school, they have a page on caring for the environment. They encourage all Soto Zen practitioners to follow the Principles of Green Life. Number 2 is: Do not waste water; it is the source of life.

We can look to our Zen tradition for guidance on how to engage with water. We can read beautiful Zen teachings about water and be inspired. We can decide to really notice water, really touch water, and really appreciate water when we engage with it, and allow this appreciation to awaken gratitude. We can express this gratitude in our actions. We can awaken compassion for water, and for all the beings that depend on water. We can work to ensure equitable access to

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water. We can take beneficial actions that preserve the integrity of waterways and water systems. We can recognize that water has a right to be its own true nature without us poisoning or harming it. We can also realize that water is subtle and profound and beyond beautiful or any other concept. Dogen said, "To consider water as only flowing is to slander water with the word 'flowing.'" If we stay fully present when we engage with water and allow our awareness to guide our story, perhaps we will experience the water from our tap as the long broad tongue of Buddha speaking to us, always as wisdom water.

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June Practice Intensive

Sunday, June 2, through Sunday, June 30

I like to think of what Master Dogen says in his fascicle, Ocean Mudra Samadhi. He implies that while we are swimming in the waves on the surface, our feet are at the same time walking on the bottom. In the moment-by-moment, ever-changing events of our life, our practice is to be grounded in great immobile stillness.

— Sojun Mel Weitsman

You are warmly invited to touch bottom and find stillness by participating in the upcoming four-week June Practice Intensive, June 2-30. This is an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to daily zazen, and experiment with the boundaries of the time and energy we can devote to practice. Similar to practicing at a residential center, our efforts will support each other and in so doing can radiate outward to the wider sangha of all beings.

During this period we will have daily morning in-person zazen Monday-Friday at 6:00 and 6:50 AM, followed by service. On Tuesday evenings we will have one period of zazen at 7 PM followed by a Way Seeking Mind talk each week by a sangha member. Sunday morning public zazen beginning at 9 AM will continue as usual. We will also have an additional period of in-person zazen on Wednesday evenings at 6 PM.

In the Thursday night Zoom Study Group, from 7:00-8:00, we will read portions of Sojun Mel Weitsman's book, *Seeing One Thing Through*.

On **June 2, 9, and 30** we will have Practice Intensive Teas in the zendo. ***Those participating in the Practice Intensive are expected to attend all three of the Sunday morning Teas.***

In addition, there will be small group teas led by long-term practitioners. Because of our individual circumstances, ***there is no minimum participation other than the three Sunday morning Teas.***

Please draw up a realistic schedule for yourself that will stretch you a little, then try to commit yourself to this schedule for the entire four weeks. Joining others for zazen and in practice is mutually supportive and gives us a clear experience of our mutual interdependence. We hope you participate.

Sincerely,

Zenki

To register please include your name and contact information and circle the days and times you plan to participate on the registration form and return it with a \$10 registration fee by **Wednesday, May 29**.

Board of Directors for 2024

The Chapel Hill Zen Center Board of Directors are John Paredes, President; Chris Censello, Vice President; Mike McKillip, Treasurer; Danielle Bouchard, Secretary; Al-Nisa Berry and Lance Ashdown, Members-at-Large; and Josho Pat Phelan, ex officio.

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June Practice Period 2024

Name _____

Email: _____

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 2	June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8
9:00 zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	Workshop
11:20 Tea	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
			Evening			
	5:30 study	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	7:00 study		
		7:45 Talk				
June 9	June 10	June 11	June 12	June 13	June 14	June 15
9:00 zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	
11:20 Tea	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
			Evening			
	5:30 study	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	7:00 study		
		7:45 talk				
June 16	June 17	June 18	June 19	June 20	June 21	June 22
9:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	7:30 Orientation
Dharma Talk	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
			Evening			
	5:30 study	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	7:00 study		
		7:45 Talk				
June 23	June 24	June 25	June 26	June 27	June 28	June 29
All Day Sitting	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	6:00 am zazen	
10:30 Talk	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	6:50 zazen	
			Evening			
	5:30 study	7:00 zazen	6:00 zazen	7:00 study		
		7:45 Talk				
June 30						
9:am zazen						
11:20 Tea						

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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Buddhist practice is not about trying to get something in your hand by practice....Buddhist practice is about deepening yourself. If you are always trying to get by on the basis of your desire by your understanding, by your feeling, it's very hard to deepen yourself because you will always look at yourself in terms of your feelings, your desire, your grasping....

"For awhile, stop any seeing of the human world through your desire, through your feelings. Just open yourself. Then, this is practice, zazen, chanting, study. It means throwing away your individual desires, in that "I" want to get something, or "I" want to deepen myself, or "I" want to be a good boy....All you have to do is follow the Buddha's teaching. When the time comes to do zazen, just sit down. When the time comes to listen to Buddha's teaching, just listen to it.... That is Buddhist practice.

Dainin Katagiri Roshi

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.