



# Berkeley Zen Center



July–August 2022 Newsletter

## Practice Period Completed!

During the five weeks of BZC's spring practice period, Gary Artim, Enzan Chotoku, served as head suden and shared the Abbot's seat with Hozan Alan Senauke. The PP was kicked off by reopening the zendo (with strict covid protocols) for daily zazen to the public and the Saturday programs to PP participants. Fifty-six people registered for the five weeks, attending both online and in-person events. This included a weekly class studying the Lotus Sutra, tea with the shuso, a PP dinner, and culminating with a five-day sesshin.

In the Soto tradition, a new abbot's first practice period with a shuso is a kind of confirmation of his or her position. With our spring practice period, Hozan has taken this step. Congratulations to all of us for our great efforts!

## One-Day Sesshin

We will have a one-day sesshin on Saturday, August 6, from 7:50 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You can participate either in person (enrollment limited to 30 people) or via Zoom. For further information, please contact sesshin director Rob Lyons ([dharmawork@yahoo.com](mailto:dharmawork@yahoo.com)), and check the BZC website for updates.



### Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Berkeley Zen Center is a sangha of Buddhist practitioners drawing from the Bay Area's many spiritual and cultural communities. Just as Shakyamuni Buddha welcomed people of all backgrounds to practice, here at BZC our activities embrace diversity, and are available to people of every color, every way of life and ethnic background, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and ability. May all beings practice in safety and equality, realizing our true nature.

## B Z C S C H E D U L E

### July

**Zendo Holiday**  
Monday, 7/4

**Founders' Ceremony**  
Thursday, 7/7, 7:00am

**Board Meeting**  
Sunday, 7/17, 9:00–11:00am

### August

**Founders' Ceremony**  
Saturday, 8/6, 9:20am

**One-Day Sesshin**  
Saturday, 8/6

**Half-Day Sitting**  
Sunday, 8/14

**Board Meeting**  
Sunday, 8/21, 9:00–11:00am

For more complete and up-to-date information, please check the BZC website ([berkeleyzencenter.org](http://berkeleyzencenter.org)) and subscribe to BZC's community listserv.

## **Many Communities, One Sangha: Community-of-Practice Program**

BZC will offer an 11-month program to learn ways to make the Dharma available and free from hindrance to all who walk through the gate. The program will focus on increasing our capacity as a sangha to deal with the intensity of emotion and pain that arises when we are intimate together. “Community of practice” is a process of learning by doing, together over time, in community, based on shared values and concerns.

Envisioned is a two-part process: a video/discussion curriculum to give us the opportunity to explore our vision, goals, and concerns, together with experiential learning, offering practical, hands-on skill development. We will meet once a month, alternating between these two modalities.

“Many Communities, One Sangha” is a community-of-practice program developed by the East Bay Meditation Center (EBMC) in collaboration with the Soto Zen Buddhist Association (SZBA). It includes videos, readings, and discussion, with meetings of around 2.5 hours each, exploring questions like:

- What do we actually mean by equity?
- What are the values, intentions, and commitments that drive our pursuit of equity?
- What does it mean to create sanghas that offer trust, dignity, and belonging to a diverse community?
- What does it mean to practice being in “right relationship” to hierarchy and authority in our communities?

The experiential sessions will be facilitated by Rhonda Magee, a student of Norman Fischer and Joan Halifax. Rhonda received lay entrustment from Joan Halifax and is the author of *The Inner Work of Racial Justice*:

*Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness.*

The program will be provided to as many people at BZC who wish to participate. We aim to be able to provide the program to (at least) 50 BZC members and friends. The program will be offered again a second year. There will be some cost to individuals, and we are seeking funding through donations and grants.

## **Coming-of-Age Program**

BZC will be offering a Coming-of-Age program for youth between the ages of 12 and 14. Participants will study basic Buddhist teachings, mindfulness, precepts, and communication skills, and explore ways to celebrate their journey toward adulthood.

The program will meet monthly for two hours on Sundays from September 2022 through June 2023. For more information, please contact Marie Hopper at [marie\\_hopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net).

## **BZC Board Nominations**

Are you interested in serving on the BZC Board or do you know someone who you would like to nominate? If so, please contact the Board Recruitment and Elections Committee: Ed Herzog ([edherzog48@gmail.com](mailto:edherzog48@gmail.com)) or Ellen Webb ([elweb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:elweb@sbcglobal.net)). Please include any relevant information about why you or your nominee would make a good BZC Board member.

Every year the Berkeley Zen Center sangha selects up to three at-large members to two-year terms on the BZC Board. This year we have three vacancies. Board members may serve a maximum of two consecutive, two-year terms. Elections take place in October and the new term starts in January 2023. The Board will present its three nominees at the All-

Sangha Potluck on Sunday evening, September 18. Nominations can also be made by sangha members at the All-Sangha Potluck.

Some of the various skills the Board seeks in nominees are oral and written communication, organizational experience, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance, and non-profit law. Nominees should be members of BZC. Board members attend about ten Sunday morning meetings a year plus an all-day retreat in the first part of the year, and serve on at least one working Board committee: Finance; Buildings & Grounds; Development; Electronic Communication & Social Media; Archive; and Elections & Nominations.

### Generous Dana Gifts

During this last season, BZC received two extremely generous anonymous donations of \$25,000 each. We are astonished and delighted; we offer deep bows to these unknown benefactors. These gifts give us an ample “prudent reserve” which can support upcoming projects (now in the planning stages) to enhance our ventilation and sanitation. Thank you!

### Opportunity to Reciprocate

If you would like an opportunity to serve both the sangha and the zendo (who never complains) consider taking a turn at chiden service. The commitment is once a week for three months, with the option to continue.

For more information, please contact Nancy Friedberg ([94618nf@gmail.com](mailto:94618nf@gmail.com)).



*Benji Nancy, Shuso Gary, Abbott Hozan, Jisha Joe*

### Benji Poem for Enzan Chotoku Gary Artim

*Keyboard clicks  
Basketballs bounce  
A full court press*

*Our Shuso Enzan Chotoku Round Mountain,  
Clear Genuine*

*Showers us with his kind heart and sincere  
practice*

*At Old Plum Mountain we once again gather  
Body to body  
Heart to heart*

*The mourning doves, east and west call to us  
Wake up  
Take a breath  
Settle in  
Can you hear it?*

*Medicine and disease subdue each other:  
The whole world is medicine; What is your self?*

*Circling, Circling  
Where do you land?*

*Now let us hear the Shuso*

—Mitsuko Myojun Nancy Suib  
June 12, 2022



## Being Benji

When Hozan first asked if I would be the Benji for this practice period, my initial response was one of hesitation. The invitation brought up doubting mind. As an introvert, and also dealing with various health issues, I wasn't certain that I would be able to do all that this position required.

After discussing this with Hozan and some former Benjis, and trying to practice "don't know mind" and "responding to what's being asked" to support and nurture our sangha, I said yes.

While I didn't know our shuso Gary Artim very well, it became immediately clear after meeting with him at Saul's Deli that this was going to be a great opportunity to get to know him, and that we could mutually support each other.

Gary and I discussed various possibilities of tea schedules, what was needed, and how I could best support him during this time. He graciously offered to add the online schedule components so that the sangha could respond.

Having the teas with the sangha offered a more intimate opportunity to serve and to feel more connected with the sangha as a whole; especially since we had not met in person for more than two years.

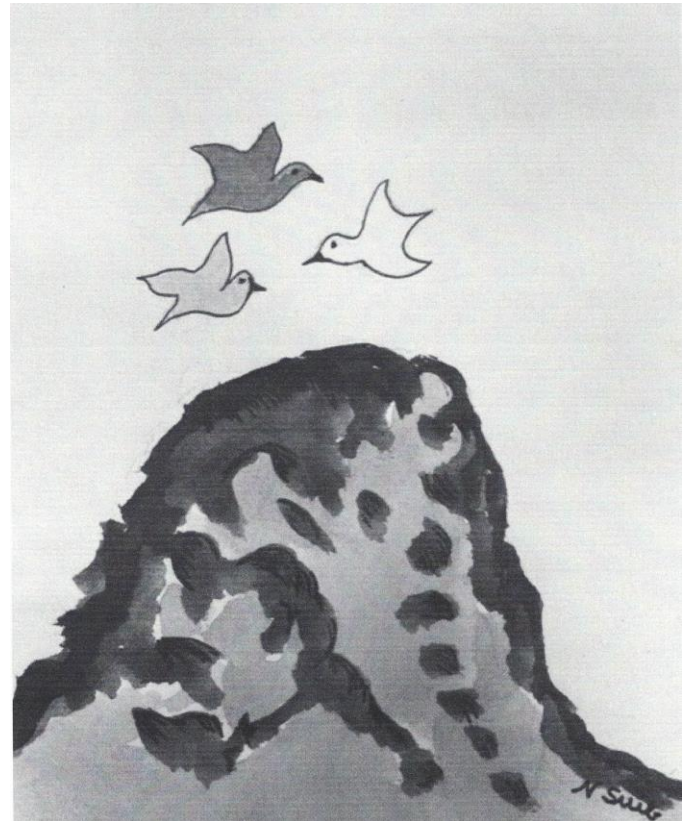
The other part of the position that initially gave me pause was writing the Benji poem. My wife Karen Sundheim is the poet in our family, and with her encouragement and advice, and meeting with Luminous Heart, the poem began to arise organically.

Doing the five-day sesshin completely, culminating in the Shuso Hossen, was another practice opportunity to be with the sangha; allowing body and mind to drop away. Being in the zendo again, following our breath, kinhin, chanting, studying the koan of the Whole World Is Medicine, and having

delicious daily lunches prepared by our awesome tenzos Laurie and Susan, was enlivening and full of joy.

Deep gratitude to Abbot Hozan and to everyone who assisted, gave support, and practiced together.

—Nancy Suib



*For Shuso Round Mountain, by Benji Nancy*

## For Shuso Enzan Chotoku Gary Artim Benji

*With great congratulations  
A clear and genuine voice  
Issues from the shuso's body  
Enzan has scaled the mountain  
Taking a straight path  
To the heights  
From which he pours the medicine of kindness  
Into the lake of suffering  
And now the round mountain  
Rests atop the mountain seat  
Mountain upon mountain*

—Hozan

## Dharma Transmissions

In early July, Abbot Hozan will offer Dharma Transmission to Juen Friederike Boissevain and Nanzan Harald Schoecklmann in week-long ceremonies here at BZC. Juen and Nanzan are the teachers at our BZC affiliate Wind und Wolken Sangha (Wind and Clouds) in Bornstein, northern Germany. As medical doctors, they are also founders of Hospiz im Wohld, a hospice service and facility in Gettorf, Germany. In the next issue of this newsletter we will share some of their comments on the wonderful occasion of their transmission.

## Recent BZC Library Acquisitions

*Painting Enlightenment: Healing Visions of the Heart Sutra*, Paula Kane Robinson Arai; *The Path to Bodhidharma*, Shodo Harada Roshi; *Trust, Realization, and the Self in Soto Zen Practice*, Daijaku Kinst; *Two Buddhas Seated Side by Side: A Guide to the Lotus Sutra*, Donald S. Lopez and Jacqueline I. Stone; *The Buddha in Jail*, Cuong Lu; *The Shamanic Bones of Zen*, Zenju Earthlyn Manuel; *Kobun's Teaching on Platform Sutra*, Kobun Chino Otogawa; *The Stories of the Lotus Sutra*, Gene Reeves; *American Sutra: A Story of Faith and Freedom in the Second World War*, Duncan Ryuken Williams.



*Sojun Memorial Altar at Green Gulch  
(see article and poem on the following pages)*

### **Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.**

July 2:	Abbot Hozan
July 9:	Juen Friederike Boissevain
July 16:	Ellen Webb
July 23:	Abbot Hozan
July 30:	Ross Blum
August 6:	Abbot Hozan
August 13:	Susan Marvin
August 20:	Abbot Hozan
August 27:	Laurie Senauke

### **Monday Morning Talks, 8:00 a.m.**

July 4:	Zendo holiday
July 11:	Nanzen Harald Schoecklmann
July 18:	Elijah McBride
July 25:	Joe Buckner
August 1:	Open Discussion
August 8:	Leslie Batholic
August 15:	Heather Sarantis
August 22:	Helen Cheng
August 29:	Diane Ritchey

### **Friday Afternoon Talks, 5:45 p.m.**

July 1:	Hava Glick-Landes
August 5:	Yoni Ackerman

### **Current Weekly Schedule**

Many of our programs are now open to a limited number of in-person masked attendees. If you are interested in attending, please send your vax and booster information to the Office Manager ([bzcoffice manager@gmail.com](mailto:bzcoffice manager@gmail.com)) AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU ATTEND (if you come sooner than that, also bring your vax card and ID with you).

Our programming varies between in-person-only, online-only, and hybrid. See the BZC website ([berkeleyzencenter.org](http://berkeleyzencenter.org)) for details.

## Again, Farewell to the White Dragon

Ring the bells, beat the drum, clang the cymbals, chant the Ten Names of Buddha and to them add the name Hakuryo Sojun Mel Weitsman Daisoho—White Dragon/Essence of Purity. At last, eighteen months after Sojun's death on January 7, 2021, we have performed the appropriate Zen rites to honor his passing into the realm of Buddhas and ancestors gone before.

Although according to Sojun Roshi and all enlightened beings there is truly no coming and going, no birth and death, still we offer rituals and ceremonies that mark transition and allow us to touch the depths of our gratitude, our joy in encountering a teacher like Sojun, and our grief at his seeming departure. Even today I find myself looking out my kitchen window toward his office, which is now my office, to see if he might be down there, so I can knock on his door and sit down to talk.

On the weekend of June 18 and 19, with the support of so many good friends at Berkeley Zen Center, San Francisco Zen Center, and the Soto Zen Buddhism International Center, two funerary ceremonies were held for Sojun Roshi. It is a Zen tradition to have an intimate convocation of family and students the night before the more formal funeral.

*Taiya nenju*—which means, roughly, “prayer on the funeral eve”—was attended by thirty-five people in the zendo and a like number online. For *taiya* and the funeral itself, the family and a teacher's disciples serve as mourners. Reviewing his notes from Suzuki Roshi's long-ago funeral, Tenshin Anderson Roshi described us a “barefoot hosts,” humbly dressed, with no footwear. Since family and disciples were mourners, we were fortunate to have Rev. Meiya Honshu Wender from Green Gulch serve as the *taiya* officiant. Meiya performed her simple tasks beautifully, honoring her long connection with Sojun through many practice periods at Tassajara and Green Gulch, going back more than thirty-five years.

After initial offerings, chanting the Ten Names of Buddha, the *Sandokai*, and *Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo*, heartfelt words to and about Sojun Roshi were offered by Rev. Hozan Alan Senauke, Rev. Denkei Raul Moncayo, Ross Blum, Rev. Mary Mocine, Rev. Ryushin Andrea Thach, Rev. Gerry Oliva, Karen Sundheim, and Ron Nestor. (We are presently collecting and transcribing the BZC and Green Gulch statements to share with Sojun's students.) As we stepped out of the zendo that evening, there was a lingering golden light and stillness in the air, a feeling that matched the depth and intimacy of our love for Sojun.

\* \* \*

The next day, Green Gulch Farm hosted Sojun Roshi's long-delayed funeral. One hundred twenty of us gathered in person, observing careful masking and vaccination protocols in the Green Dragon zendo. Another hundred fifty guests watched online. At 2:45 the great *bonsho's* deep tones called us

together, and in a solemn procession disciples chanted the names of Buddha while circumambulating the temple, carrying Sojun's ashes, portrait, robes, and his personal teaching implements. These things were carefully placed on the altar, along with offerings of incense, sweet water, green tea, and dharma words—*hogo*—composed by officiants Konjin Godwin Roshi of Houston Zen Center and Gengo Akiba Roshi, the Soto Zen bishop of North America.

With stately drama, Tenshin Anderson Roshi—the chief officiant and dharma companion of Sojun Roshi for nearly sixty years, including their co-abbacy of San Francisco Zen center in the late 80s and 90s—drew a torch in a great circle of fire, which as principal disciple, I mirrored with a second flaming torch, symbolizing the burning up of Sojun's residual karma and his fearless entry into the boundless realm of death beyond the particularity of life. This was followed by Tenshin Roshi's moving tribute to Sojun's teaching.

As in the previous evening at BZC, a small number of family, friends, and disciples were invited to share the heart of Sojun Roshi's dharma as each experienced him after many years of practice together. There were brief presentations by Liz Horowitz, Hoitsu Suzuki Roshi, Susan Marvin, Doug Greiner, Rev. Paul Haller, Rev. Shosan Vicki Austin.

Each person's words were unique and personal, each conveyed Sojun's joy and complete confidence in our Zen way that, day by day, year by year, he transmitted to us.

The ceremony was completed with sutra chanting, dedication of merit, and bows of appreciation to the three officiants. Both Saturday and Sunday ceremonies concluded with an opportunity for all those present to offer incense and pay their respects to Sojun Roshi. While they came forward, a lovely recorded passage from Bach, with Sojun Roshi playing recorder and Nick Bertani on cello, filled the air.

\* \* \*

So many hands from our "beloved community" went into these once-in-a-lifetime ceremonies. Bows of gratitude to Liz Horowitz; to our officiants Rev. Tenshin Reb Anderson, Rev. Gengo Akiba, Rev. Konjin Gaelyn Godwin, Rev. Furyu Schroeder, and Rev. Meiya Wender; to Rev. Ejo McMullen, Rev. Ryoko Miyazaki, Rev. Taiga Ito, and Rev. Dokan Kojima from the Soto Zen Buddhism International Center; to Jiryu Rutschman-Byler and the Green Gulch/Green Dragon Temple staff; and to Mary Duryee, Marie Hopper, Gerry Oliva, and the tireless Berkeley Zen Center sangha.

—Hozan



## For Hakuryu Sojun's Funeral

*In the fall of 1964,  
You entered the dawn zendo  
With your artist's fire  
And the Kabbalistic eye of a seeker  
Behind you Suzuki Roshi  
Gently adjusted your posture  
Leaning down to demonstrate the cosmic mudra  
And you were home*

*Fifty-six years later, now  
You have left one home for another  
Sojun who had been and still is Mel  
Became a handful of fire  
A dharma wind  
And today I stand here  
In the Green Dragon's nest  
A barefoot host to your teaching*

*You taught me  
To read the other side of the page  
And to see Buddha in each being  
To rely on no particular thing  
Not even you  
As you did, I rely on everything  
You asked Suzuki Roshi, "What is Nirvana?"  
He said, "Seeing one thing through to the end"*

—Hozan Alan Senauke  
Green Dragon Zen Temple  
19 June 2022

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
for the September–October issue is  
*Friday, August 19.*

Please submit items to  
[knabb@bopsecrets.org](mailto:knabb@bopsecrets.org).

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