



Berkeley Zen Center



May–June 2022 Newsletter

Come to the Zendo

Join us back in the zendo!

For the last several weeks, morning zazen at 6:00 a.m. has been open to members in person who have registered their vaccination and booster status. We sit for an hour, with a signal after 40 minutes, allowing people to stretch or change position. Zazen is followed by chanting service and a short period of temple cleaning. Given the uncertainty about the course of the pandemic in the coming months, we remain masked and socially distanced in the zendo. Despite these inconveniences, it has been a joyous and familiar pleasure to be back in the zendo together after more than two years.

On the week of May 2, BZC will reopen for public zazen at 5:40 p.m. each weekday, and a noon period on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Once again, we are maintaining our vaccination, masking, and seating protocols to minimize the risk of infection.

If you wish to register your vaccination and booster status, send a photo of your card to Office Manager Helen Cheng (bzcofficeanager@gmail.com). For questions about our program, contact BZC's Coordinator Carol Paul (caroljpaul@yahoo.com).



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

May

One-Day Sesshin
Saturday, 5/7

Founders' Ceremony
Saturday, 5/7, 9:20am

Practice Period Opening Ceremony
Saturday, 5/7, 11:20am

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 5/15

Shuso Dinner
Saturday, 5/28

Zendo Holiday
Monday, 5/30

June

Board Meeting
Sunday, 6/5, 9:00–11:00am

Sangha Work Day
Sunday, 6/5

Founders' Ceremony
Tuesday, 6/7

Five-Day Sesshin (End Practice Period)
Wednesday–Sunday, 6/8–6/12

Shuso Hossen
Sunday, 6/12, 3:30pm

Zendo Holiday
6/13

Sojun Roshi Memorial at Green Gulch Farm
Sunday, 6/19, 3:00pm

For the most complete and up-to-date information, please check the BZC website and subscribe to BZC's community listserv.

Spring Practice Period

Our annual spring practice period will begin with a one-day sitting on Saturday, May 7, and continue through a five-day sesshin and Shuso Ceremony on Sunday, June 12. Whether you are sitting in the zendo or at home, Abbot Hozan invites each of us to increase our commitment to practice for these five weeks, according to the demands of our work, family, and other obligations.

Hozan has asked Enzan Chotoku Gary Artim (*Round Mountain/Clear Genuine*) to be shuso. Nancy Suib will serve as benji, assisting the shuso throughout the practice period.

In our Soto Zen 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 takes this step.

There will be a Thursday evening class with Hozan, studying the classic Lotus Sutra parables (online only). At all events, due to our Covid protocols, in-person attendance will be limited, and the schedule is subject to change. The sesshins will be in a hybrid live and Zoom format. Because we are still working on new sanitation policies for food service, both the opening and closing sesshins are scheduled for 7:50 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For the May 7 sesshin, in-person participants should bring a bag lunch. For the five-day sesshin, we are considering offering oryoki lunch for in-person attendees, so stay tuned! For a practice period calendar and online application, see the BZC website. Please register by Wednesday, May 4.

Half-Day Sitting

On Sunday May 15 we will have an in-person half-day sitting from 8:00 a.m. to noon. For further information, or to sign up, please contact Mark Copithorne (510-703-5465 or copithorne@hotmail.com).

Practice Period Sesshins

Abbot Hozan will lead our one-day sesshin on Saturday, May 7, and our five-day sesshin on Wednesday through Sunday, June 8–12. Both sesshins will be in a hybrid (Zoom and/or in-person) format; details are still being worked out. Please sign up at the BZC website by the Wednesday before each sesshin.

When paying for sesshin, please indicate on your check or in the PayPal note field that your donation is for the "May sesshin" or the "June five-day sesshin," as the case may be. The suggested donation is \$15 per day, or whatever you can afford. Mail a check to BZC Office Manager, 1931 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94703, or pay through the website using the "Sits/Classes" tab on the "Donate" page. Please consider a donation to Berkeley Zen Center above the suggested fee to help us maintain our practice.

If you have any questions, please contact the sesshin director, Blake Tolbert, at blake.tolbert@berkeleyzencenter.org

Sangha Work Day

Please save the date and join us for our all-sangha work day on Sunday, June 5! The day will open with coffee and pastries at 8:00 a.m., then zazen from 8:15 to 8:40, work circle at 8:45, with work starting at 9:00. Lunch will be provided by our tenzos from noon until work circle at 12:45 p.m., and we'll wind up with informal zazen 3:45–4:00. Greg Denny will be the Work Leader for the day.

Come and join the festivities of caring for our temple property. Whether you are here for part or the entire work day, all who enter through our gates reap the benefits of our efforts!

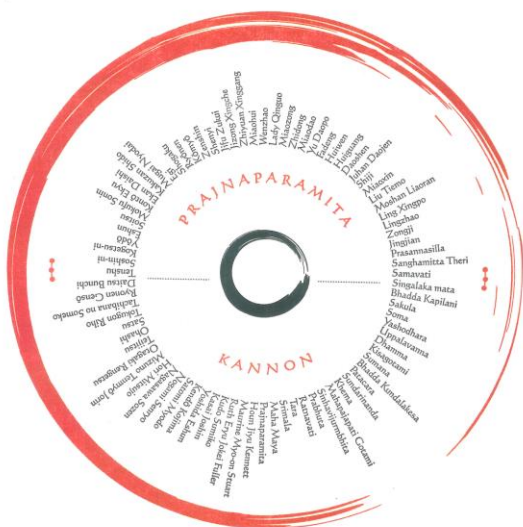
The Circle of Women Ancestors

At our Jukai ceremony last fall, I spoke briefly about the Women Ancestors document that Gerry Oliva and I gave to all the ordinees. This lovely document honors broadly the women ancestors—known and unknown—who have nurtured the Dharma from its earliest days down to the present. The document was created by members of the Soto Zen Buddhist Association, based on considerable research and creativity.

After our Jukai, several BZC members expressed interest in receiving this document. I would like to offer this widely to all women and men who have received Jukai or priest ordination. The document, which centers on the elegant circle pictured below, will be personalized for you, with your birth and dharma names, signed and sealed. I hope that we can offer these in a ceremony and celebration in the next few months.

If you would like to receive this document, please send a note, including your dharma name, to my new assistant Jonathan Koltz (jonkoltz@gmail.com). If you have any questions, please write me directly.

—Hozan



Sojun Roshi's Funeral

When Sojun Roshi died in January of 2021, the pandemic prevented us from holding the funeral his family, students, and wide circle of loving community had wished to hold, honoring his long and rich life. On Sunday, June 19, at Green Gulch Farm we will, at last, be able to memorialize our beloved teacher.

In our Soto Zen tradition, there are intimate forms and ceremonies for honoring those departed. To accomplish this, we are fortunate to be able to draw on good friends and resources of BZC, San Francisco Zen Center, and the Soto Zen International Center.

BZC members should have received an invitation, via Paperless Post. We ask you to RSVP so we can be clear about logistical needs. If you have questions about the invitation, please contact Mary Duryee: maduryee@icloud.com.

Note that there will be a smaller ceremony at BZC for our members on Saturday, June 18, in the afternoon or evening. Further details to be announced.

Nominations for the BZC Board

Every year the sangha elects three of six members-at-large to two-year terms to the BZC Board. Board members may serve a maximum of two consecutive 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. Other nominations can be made by sangha members at that meeting.

Some of the various skills the board seeks in nominees (not all in one person) are: oral and written communication, organization, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance, and nonprofit law. Nominees should be members of BZC. Board members attend about ten Sunday morning meetings a year plus one 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.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, or know someone whom you would like to nominate, please contact the Board Recruitment and Elections Committee: Ed Herzog (edherzog@comcast.net), Carol Paul (carolpaul@yahoo.com), and Ellen Webb (elweb@sbcglobal.net). Please include any relevant information about why you think the person would be a good BZC Board member.

Buddha's Birthday Celebration

On April 9 BZC celebrated Buddha's Birthday. New Head Chiden Nancy Friedberg, flower arranger Barbara Strauss, and a bevy of volunteers provided stunning floral arrangements for the altar and the rear of the zendo.



BZC and Climate Change

In this issue and the next, our column will briefly summarize the IPCC Working Group III Sixth Assessment Report, which you may have heard about in the news.

That's a mouthful! First, let's demystify the terminology:

- The IPCC is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a UN body responsible for providing governments with scientific information to make climate policy. The IPCC issues Assessment Reports every 5 to 7 years, and just released their Sixth Assessment Report.
- Each Assessment Report has three working groups, which release their own sections of the overall report. Working Group III handles mitigation (what we can do to stop climate change), and released their report on April 4, 2022.

That report shows that our current mitigation policies will lead to a world that is over 3 degrees warmer than preindustrial average. This blows past a goal of 1.5 or 2 degrees of warming. We must reduce our emissions by 50% by 2030 to have a chance of staying well under 2 degrees, which is critical to human and ecosystem health. The good news is that we have the technology to do this! The time for action is now.

The report identifies a chief obstacle to action: a lack of political will made worse by corporations and lobbyists who act as impediments to real climate action. The biggest collective solutions we should be organizing toward are state and federal policies that:

- rapidly deploy wind and solar technologies,
- electrify transit,
- electrify buildings, and
- end fossil fuel subsidies and stop the extraction of fossil fuels.

The report highlights that the global richest 10% generate disproportionately more carbon emission than others, between 36 and 45% of all carbon emissions. (If you make over \$35,000/year or have assets worth more than \$12,000, you are a member of the richest 10%!) The report highlights actions the global rich should Avoid, Shift, and Improve:

- Avoid taking long-haul flights or regularly using a car;
- Shift to more public transit and fewer animal products; and
- Improve by using electrified heating, appliances, and cars.

Avoiding, shifting, and improving your habits in these ways, and then sharing this with your friends and neighbors is a great way to tie individual and collective action together.

Many thanks for reading, and for your continued commitment to saving all beings.

—Brianna McGuire (BZC resident)

BZC Online Schedule

Though we are hoping to phase in more in-person activities in the coming months, we are continuing to offer the following programs on the Zoom platform. To take part in any of these public programs, go to the BZC website (www.berkeleyzencenter.org) and click the "Enter the Zendo Now" link.

Zazen Monday–Friday:

- 6:00–7:00 a.m.
- 7:30–8:10 a.m.
- 5:40–6:20 p.m.

(See Calendar for special Monday morning schedule.)

Informal Noon Zazen (in-person only):

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 12:00–12:30 p.m.

Chanting for All Who Are Suffering:

Tuesdays, 8:15–8:45 a.m.

Well-Being Service:

Wednesdays, 7:00 a.m.

Wednesday Night Drop-In:

See BZC website for details.

Saturday Program:

Zendo opens: 8:30 a.m.

Zazen: 8:40–9:20

Service: 9:20–9:30

Kinhin/break: 9:30–9:40

Zazen: 9:40–10:10

Lecture: 10:15–11:15

Zazen Instruction is offered every Saturday from 8:40–9:20 a.m., but via a different link.

Go to the BZC website and click "Zazen Instruction."

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.

May 7:	Abbot Hozan
May 14:	Gary Artim
May 21:	TBD
May 28:	Gary Artim
June 4:	TBD
June 11:	TBD
June 18:	TBD
June 25:	Zenshin Greg Fain

Monday Morning Talks, 8:00 a.m.

May 2:	Open Discussion
May 9:	Gary Artim
May 16:	Ron Nestor
May 23:	Luminous Heart Penelope Thompson
June 6:	Shosan with Abbot Hozan
June 13:	TBD
June 20:	TBD
June 27:	Ten Bartholomew

Friday Afternoon Talks, 5:45 p.m.

May 6:	Judy Smith
June 3:	Marie Hopper

Practice Period

In Dogen Zenji's *Eihei Koroku* this is recorded: "Dogen held up his whisk, and with it drew a circle in the air. He said, 'Practice period goes beyond this.' "

For more than thirty years Berkeley Zen Center has offered a spring practice period. These were usually led by our founding teacher, Sojun Roshi. Now, as the new abbot of BZC, I am honored to lead this year's practice period, as we emerge from strange days of pandemic.

In the Zen tradition, the word used for practice period is *ango*, which means "peaceful abiding." In China and Japan this would be a three-month residential intensive, with its own root in the early Buddhist "rains retreat," when wandering monks and nuns would gather in monasteries during monsoon season.

Our practice period, in the springtime when the circle of life turns in joyous renewal, is an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the practice of living an enlightened life, to renew our beginner's mind. Dogen Zenji speaks of "practice realization," meaning that our Zen practice does not so much aim toward a goal of awakening, but rather that our practice expresses the enlightenment that is always within and available to us. Practice period includes sitting, walking, chanting, cooking, serving, eating, working, resting—all of this is enlightened activity, woven into whole cloth by zazen.

BZC is not a monastery, so our members have jobs, families, and responsibilities outside the gate. Our practice is as much in our homes and in the world as in the zendo. This is our ongoing Dharma experiment—dedicated lay practice, sitting with everything. During practice period we have recommended requirements, but as Sojun Roshi said, "within these requirements each person can create his or her own schedule. This is the nature of lay practice. Some will be able to do only the minimum, while others who have the opportunity will be able to extend or stretch themselves much more."

We may wish to do it all, but each of us must be realistic about our capacity. The important thing for each of us—during practice period and throughout the year—is to clarify and set our practice intention, then do our best to keep to that intention. You don't have to break your bones to do practice period. But don't be slack with yourself either. With Right Effort our practice edge comes into view. What is the Middle Way? Whatever commitment and schedule one comes up with, we are all practicing together intimately.

Not everyone in the sangha will be able to clear the time and energy to participate in practice period. That is completely understandable, and everyone, of course, is welcome to come to the zendo when they can. All of us are supporting and being supported by the practice period—peaceful abiding. These weeks together can extend throughout the year. As Dogen says, "Practice period goes beyond this."

—Hozan Alan Senauke

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

for the July–August issue is
Friday, June 17.

Please submit items to
knabb@bopsecrets.org.

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