



# Berkeley Zen Center



## May-June 2016 Newsletter

### Practice Period is here!

Practice Period began on Saturday, April 30th and will end on Sunday, June 12th.

This year's shuso is long time practicing member Walter Kieser, Kosan Shinshi, (Tall Mountain, Deep Stillness). Helping Walter as his benji is Mary Duryee.

Please see the Practice Period calendar later in the newsletter for all the details.



Haiga painting by BZC member Kazumi Cranney



### Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Welcoming diversity, here at Berkeley Zen Center the practice of zazen is available to people of every race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

## B Z C S c h e d u l e

### May

#### Founders' Ceremonies

Monday, 5/2, 6:20pm  
Tuesday, 5/3, 6:40am

#### Half-day Sitting

Sunday, 5/15, 8:00am – noon

#### Practice Period Dinner & Skit Night

Saturday, 5/21

#### Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 5/21, 9:40am

#### Zendo Holiday

Monday, 5/30

### June

#### Founders' Ceremonies

Thursday, 6/2, 6:20pm  
Friday, 6/3, 6:40am

#### Lay Ordination / Zaiko Tokudo

6/4

#### Five-day Sesshin/

#### Close Spring Practice Period

Wednesday, 6/8 to Sunday, 6/12

#### Shuso Hossen

Sunday, 6/12

#### Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 6/18, 9:40am

#### Half-day Sitting

Sunday, 6/26, 8:00am – noon

### July

#### Zazenkai

Sunday, 7/10

#### Mountains and Rivers

Thursday, 7/28 to Sunday, 7/31

## **Practice Period Class with Sojun Each Thursday from May 5<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Sojun's class subject for the spring practice period will be the Hsin Hsin Ming (Trust in Mind). The Hsin Hsin Ming is a fundamental classic of Zen literature, about the interpenetration of duality and non-duality in relation to our attachment to preferences and views. The Hsin Hsin Ming is by the third Chinese Zen ancestor, Seng-ts'an or Sencan who lived in the sixth century. Some scholars feel it was likely written later during the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

Sojun has taken previous English translations from the Chinese and made edits of his own for clarity. We'll use Sojun's edited version for our text. Copies are now on the patio shelf. If you're interested in other translations and a cultural/historical background to the text as well as commentary, one source is Trust in Mind by Mu Soeng. In the back section are multiple translated versions arranged in a compact and easy to compare format. It is available online used for less than \$10.

Class times are Thursday evenings 7:15-8:45. Dates are May 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Fee for the series is \$50, payable preferably by check at class. Discounts are possible by speaking with class coordinator, Ron Nestor, at class.

### **Half-Day Sitting Sunday, May 15, 8:00 am - noon**

Half-day sittings include five periods of zazen, kinhin (walking meditation) and an informal tea. Sojun Roshi asks participants to commit to the entire four-hour schedule. A \$10 donation is requested. If you have questions or if you cannot sign up on the bulletin board, contact the director Peter Overton at peterovrtn@gmail.com or 510.848.5239.



## **Five-Day Sesshin Concludes 2016 Spring Practice Period June 8 – 12**

Our spring practice period will conclude with a five-day sesshin from Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. The first four days' schedule is from 5:00am until 9:00pm, while the final day's schedule is from 5:00am until 3:10pm, followed at 3:30 by the Shuso Hossen, dharma dialogue with the Shuso. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board for a minimum of three days; we encourage you to make two of those days consecutive. If you want to request an alternative schedule, please speak to the sesshin director. Sign-ups close on Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, at 12:00 noon.

The Shuso Hossen ceremony will begin promptly at 3:30pm, and will be followed by a reception. All practice period and sesshin participants will be supporting the Shuso and our practice by coming with a question.

If this is your first sesshin at BZC, it is strongly recommended that you first participate in a full Saturday program, have oryoki instruction, and that you speak with the sesshin director. The fee is \$35 per day, advance payment requested. Leave checks marked "June sesshin" in the laundry room door donation slot. If you have questions, contact the sesshin director Gary Artim gartim@gmail.com or 510.676.9756.



## Work Day 2016 (Samu)

Wikipedia says that: "Samu refers to physical work that is done with mindfulness as a simple, practical practice...Samu is a way to bring mindfulness into everyday life as well as to get things done. Samu is popular in Zen monasteries, particularly as a means of maintaining the monastery."

Right on, Wikipedia!

Twice a year, sangha members are invited to participate in Berkeley Zen Center's work day. The first one of the year took place on Sunday, March 27th.

Our work leader, Paul Ridgway, developed a list of necessary projects to be done around the temple, and assigned each person to a crew - garden, shop/carpentry, kitchen. One shop crew sanded and put a coat of protective resin on the front zendo steps, the Abbot's entrance, and the ramp. The garden crew dug behind the zendo and along the fence leading to and away from the dokusan hut, laying mesh under the mulch to encourage the growth of some seeds, and discourage the growth of others. Our kitchen crew started early and stayed late to prepare coffee!, breakfast, picnic lunch, coffee!, and beverages and snacks throughout the day.

One can sign up for the morning, afternoon, or the whole day which begins and ends with a 20-30 minute period of zazen.

Please join us for our next work day, scheduled for Sunday, September 18th. Bring your samu mind.





### Save the Date!

When making your summer plans, please consider setting aside time to participate in the annual Mountains and Rivers Sesshin at Pt. Reyes National Seashore, Thursday, July 28th through Sunday July 31th. More details to follow in the July newsletter—feel free to contact Christy at ccalame@earthlink.net with questions.

### Lay Ordination Saturday, June 4

This year’s Lay Ordination ceremony, Zaike Tokudo, will take place on Saturday, June 4th in the zendo at 3pm.

Congratulations in advance to all who have been studying and sewing diligently with our sewing teacher Jean Selkirk. Everyone is warmly encouraged to attend the ceremony and the reception afterwards. Check the zendo bulletin board for details and please sign up for preparation (tenzo assistance & set-up) and clean-up.

### Come and Sit with Us

Monday through Friday

5:40am - 7:00am || zazen, service, soji

5:40pm - 6:30pm || zazen, service

Wednesdays

12:00pm - 12:30pm || informal zazen

### Expanded Noon Zazen Schedule

Noon zazen returns just in time for spring practice period. Beginning April 4th, we will have a midday period of zazen from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The program will also include occasional opportunities to share a bag lunch and discuss practice. Watch the web page for details.

### Nominations for the BZC Board

Every year the Sangha elects three of six members-at-large to terms of two years to the BZC Board. There is a two-term limit. Elections take place in October and the new term starts in January. The Board will present its three nominees at the all-Sangha membership meeting on September 13th, and other nominations can be made at that time from the floor by Sangha members.

The Board has already selected two of its nominees: Mark Copithorne and Stan Dewey, both of whom are currently serving their first term and have agreed to run for second terms. Troy Dufrene is retiring from the Board at the end of his term. The Board is extremely grateful for his service; he was crucial in getting the electronic voting for the Board up and running and in redesigning and maintaining the BZC website.

The Board will be considering whom to nominate to fill the third member-at-large position and would like to receive suggestions from BZC members. Among the skills needed are: oral and written communication, organization, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance and non-profit law. Board members attend monthly meetings and an all-day retreat in January, and serve on at

least one working Board committee: finance, buildings, development, electronic communication, and nomination/elections. If you have a suggested candidate or are yourself interested in being nominated, please contact the Broad Recruitment and Elections Committee chair, Stan Dewey at [standewey@comcast.net](mailto:standewey@comcast.net).

### Solar Update

After the solar panels were installed on March 15th, the solar project stalled for five weeks. Still, we are back on track now and the array should be live after a couple of inspections over the next month or two.

Anyone curious about the possibility of solar panels for their own roof can contact Mark Copithorne at [copithorne@hotmail.com](mailto:copithorne@hotmail.com). Successful referrals return \$250 to BZC.

### Saturday Speakers, 10:15 am

May 7	Sojun Mel Weitsman
May 14	Shuso Walter Kieser
May 21	Hozan Alan Senauke
May 28	Shuso Walter Kieser
June 4	Sojun Mel Weitsman
June 11	tba
June 18	Hozan Alan Senauke
June 25	tba

### Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

May 2	Mon 6:25am	Shuso Walter Kieser
May 9	Mon 6:25am	tba
May 16	Mon 6:25am	tba
May 23	Mon 6:25am	tba
May 30	Mon 6:25am	zendo holiday
June 3	Fri 5:40pm	Shosan with Sojun
June 6	Mon 6:25am	Shosan with Sojun
June 13	Mon 6:25am	zendo closed
June 20	Mon 6:25am	Karl Schoenberger
June 27	Mon 6:25am	John Lake

## Family Practice at BZC

### BZC Family Practice on Saturdays

BZC Family Practice is offered on almost all Saturdays (still check the calendar for details, and always RSVP so we can share late-breaking news), at the usual time, from 9:30 to 11:15. BZC member and Music Together teacher Ryk Groetchen will be taking the lead. See details on our section of the website: [berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice](http://berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice).

### New Sign-up Form

Check out our handy new sign up form on the website ([berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice](http://berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice)) - you may use this form, or send an email to [ryk@groetchen.org](mailto:ryk@groetchen.org).

### Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Due to the expanded KidZendo program, we will not be offering supervised play. We want to serve the needs of parents keeping the flame of practice alive, so don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, concerns, and wish list. Direct inquiries to Laurie Senauke ([lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org)).

### Family Practice E-mail Group

Our Yahoo group makes it easier to communicate about family practice. We only send, at most, one e-mail a week. To join, e-mail Marie ([marie\\_hopper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net)) or Laurie ([lauries@kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org)).

### Family Practice Schedule

Check the courtyard bulletin board or [berkeleyzencenter.org](http://berkeleyzencenter.org).

**Please RSVP for ALL family activities. Thank you.**

# BZC Spring 2016 Practice Period Schedule

*Schedule subject to change; please check bulletin board for updates.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 24	25	26	27	28	29	April 30 Sesshin/ PP opening Shuso Entering
May 1	2 AM Talk Shuso	3	4	5 Class 7:15pm Sojun Roshi	6 Bansan 5:40pm Sojun Roshi	7 Lecture- Sojun Roshi
8	9 AM Talk	10	11	12 Class 7:15pm Sojun Roshi	13	14 Lecture Shuso
15 Half-day sitting	16 AM Talk	17	18	19 Class 7:15pm Sojun Roshi	20 Talk 5:40pm Shuso	21 Lecture Hozan PP Dinner & Skit Night
22	23 AM Talk	24	25	26 Class 7:15pm Sojun Roshi	27 Zazen instr Sojun Roshi	28 Shuso lecture  Jukai Rehearse
29	30 Memorial Day Zendo Closed	31	1	2 Class 7:15pm Sojun Roshi	3 Shosan 5:40pm Sojun Roshi	4 Lecture Sojun  Jukai
5 <hr/> JUNE 12 Sesshin— Shuso Hossen	6 Shosan 5:40am <u>Sojun Roshi</u> JUNE 13 Zendo Closed in the am	7	8  Sesshin	9  Sesshin	10  Sesshin	11  Sesshin

## Some thoughts from Sojun this Practice Period



**The other** day I spoke with someone who told me what they were going to be working on during this practice period. The student then asked me what I was going to be working on. That took me a back for a moment and after a pause I said, "Just staying alive." I wasn't sure what I meant by that. But it led me to think about the millions of displaced wandering refugees in the Middle East and Europe just surviving from one meal to the next at the mercy of their hosts, devoid of all the security of a home and the familiar conveniences and necessities that we all take for granted. And added to that the missing and dead family members and friends.

When I was a kid in the 30's it was common for mothers to tell their children to eat all their porridge while thinking of the poor starving Chinese. In those days China was on the other side of the world and flying there was only a dream. So that admonition was not taken too seriously. Now the whole world is right in our face and we are confronted with the horrific explosion/implosion of the Middle East, unleashing the demonic insanity and barbarity of the sleeping giant of conflicting ideologies lying dormant there. Throughout the history of the world this has always been going on in various locales, but now, everywhere is our neighborhood. Like it or not we can't leave it. And now from a different side comes our very own contribution -- the presidential election. I will not presume to tell you how to vote. I will only urge everyone to do it. With the internet we have the convenience of being able to sign petitions online, which gives us the opportunity to express our concerns and contribute. We are not helpless.

Given the personal trials and tribulations that occupy our attention daily, and our limitations of time, it may feel annoying to have to face these larger concerns that we all share and often feel powerless to control. I am reminded of that saying "Think globally-act locally." I also like the saying to "light up your own corner of the world." To illuminate our corner of the world through zazen, both sitting and moving, regardless of our shortcomings is to find our own ground. The far reaching effects of our practice are not measurable, but each one of us has an effect on our surroundings. It is like the question: does my vote count?

I see the practice period as an annual tune-up/spring cleaning-resetting the balance and appreciating how your practice gives encouragement to my practice, and mine to yours. So after all is said and done, my work of just staying alive is to truly appreciate the opportunity to practice moment by moment with everyone. It is truly a great gift to experience the peace and freedom we have here at this point in time with our self as the only real obstacle.

**Sojun**

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**Third Friday of the month before each  
issue. Submit items to  
bzcnewsletter@gmail.com.**

**July-August deadline:  
Friday, June 24, 8:00 pm**

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