



Great Plains Zen Center



Sangha Newsletter

February through April 2018

Nirvana Day Zazenkai – February 16-18

Our annual observance of Nirvana Day—commemorating the day Shakyamuni Buddha passed from this realm and entered parinirvana at the age of 80—will be a zazenkai held February 16-18 at Great Plains Zen Center (Monroe, WI).

We will begin on Friday evening at 7:00 PM with Fustatsu (Renewal of Vows), which includes a Council about our precept practice, and then chanting. The retreat concludes on Sunday morning. *The cost of this retreat is \$75 and includes overnight lodging Friday and Saturday nights as well as all meals. Please note that the starting time for this zazenkai is 7:00 PM.*



Buddha entering Nirvana.

Nirvana Day is traditionally observed on February 15.

Beginner's Mind Sesshin – March 16-18

Those who are in the early stages of their practice are encouraged to join us in March at Myoshinji—our center's home in Monroe, Wisconsin—for our Beginner's Mind Sesshin. Sesshin (intensive practice retreats) are an important part of Zen practice. This retreat will introduce students to the formal practices that are integral to sesshin, including: sitting and walking meditation; liturgy; taking meals in the traditional, formal oryoki style; and work practice. Roshi will help students understand the many components and aspects of retreat practice, offering opportunities to ask questions about Zen practice and to explore the important student-teacher relationship.

The sesshin begins Friday evening (3/16) and concludes Sunday morning (3/18). The cost of this retreat is \$75 and includes overnight lodging Friday & Saturday, as well as all meals. Please register online at <http://greatplainszen.org>.

This sesshin coincides with Ohigan, which is a week-long observance that runs from 3 days before—until 3 days after—the March equinox (3/20 this year). Ohigan is traditionally a time to renew our determination in our practice. It is common for Buddhists to focus on study of the six paramitas (perfections): dana (giving); sila (precepts); ksanti (patience); virya (energy); samadhi (concentration); and prajna (wisdom) at this time.

Three-Day Sesshin – April 12-15

Our April Honoring The Way of Zazen Sesshin will begin on Thursday evening, April 12 and run through Sunday morning (4/15). This retreat has an emphasis on just sitting, so there will be no talks, services, dokusan or kyosaku. Join us for this opportunity to sit deeply and immerse yourself in the practice of zazen. We will also hold the Gate of Sweet Nectar ceremony at 9:00 am on Sunday morning following the retreat.

The cost of the retreat is \$150 for members, \$180 for non-members. The fee includes lodging and all meals.

Registration for GPZC Retreats & Workshops

To register for GPZC events, please register/pay online at www.greatplainzen.org. Please register for any retreat or workshop at least 1 week prior to the start. This allows us ample time to arrange all logistics for our events. If you are unable to meet this deadline, please contact us to make arrangements and check on availability of space. Late cancellations are subject to a non-refundable \$35 fee.

Our Living Soil (Class): Feb. 18 and March 11

Join us for two Sunday afternoons (1:00-3:00 PM) for this hands-on, informative, two-part class series about the nature and science of soil. Both classes take place at Great Plains Zen Center, W7762 Falk Rd., Monroe, WI 53566. The cost is \$35 per class or \$60 for both classes. Please register at <http://greatplainszen.org>.

PART I (February 18, 1:00-3:00 PM)

Matter, Mineral, Vibration: : Our Soil is Alive

This lecture and workshop will cover the basics of soil structure, soil chemistry and soil physics. Soil samples will be on hand for examination by hand, eye, nose and mouth. Microscopes will be on hand to look more closely at soil aggregate and composition and biology.

(continued...)

PART II (March 11, 1:00-3:00 PM)**Soil Safari : Digging Into Soil Biology**

In this workshop, we will get hands-on experience using qualitative methods of assessing the garden soil, prairie soil and other soils around The Great Plains Zen Center. Review how to prepare soil samples for a lab and read chemical test results. Learn basic soil biology and a few methods to increase the fertility of your soils and support your plants through environmental droughts and flooding.



Our facilitator for this class will be Nance Klehm. She is the director of Social Ecologies, whose work engages local residents in building healthy habitats and spreading holistic, systematic thinking. Social Ecologies has worked internationally on designing and training others on regenerative soil, compost and water systems. www.socialecologies.net Copies of Nance's publication [The Ground Rules: A Manual to Reconnect Soil and Soul](#) will be available for purchase at the classes.

**Buddha's Birthday Celebration, Sunday, April 8**

Our annual Buddha's Birthday celebration will take place on Sunday April 8 from 12:00-2:00 PM at Great Plains Zen Center, W7762 Falk Rd., Monroe, WI 53566. There will be a simple vegetarian lunch followed by various activities for the children including meditation and a craft. We will also have our traditional Buddha's Birthday service with the beautiful flower house.

If your children would like to participate, please contact Myoyu Roshi at s.myoyu.andersen@gmail.com or by phone at 608-325-6248. Please let us know if you would be able to come early and help make the flower house. It's a great opportunity to learn a little about Buddhism, meet like-minded children and have fun.

Weekly Sitting at Logan Square Zendo, Chicago

For members or friends living in or near the city of Chicago, Logan Square Zendo, a Great Plains Zen Center affiliate located on Chicago's northwest side, may be more convenient for weekly sitting. Sitting is every Tuesday night with a schedule as follows:

- 7:50 Zendo opens
- 8:00 Zazen (sitting)
- 8:30 Kinhin (walking)
- 8:40 Zazen
- 9:10 Four vows
- 9:15 End

For those new to practice, a brief orientation is offered during the first meditation period.

For more information, contact Matt Shingetsu Hellige at 773-255-6483, info@logansquarezen.org or visit the website www.logansquarezen.org.

Save the Date: Zenga Brush Painting May 18-20

Martha Ekyo Maezumi will offer two classes on May 18-20.

Ekyo is a talented artist and art educator with a degree in fine arts. She became interested in the Zenga form when studying with Maezumi Roshi (her late husband) at Zen Center of Los Angeles in the early 1970's. She explains: "I was asked to illustrate the ZCLA Journals, which involved immersing myself in a koan selected by Maezumi, and responding to it visually in what I felt was in line with the historic Zenga painters."

Ekyo will teach a class for children on Friday, May 18 and will offer 2-3 hour classes on Saturday afternoon (the 19th) and Sunday morning (the 20th). Classes will include instruction in brush strokes, ensōs ("Zen circles"), some calligraphy and paintings. Please check the website for details to be posted soon.



Painting by Martha Ekyo Maezumi

Engaged Buddhism

Bearing Witness to the Era of Racial Terror:

Opening of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration—April 25-28

Equal Justice Initiative and MASS Design Group have partnered to design the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, consisting of 800 columns - one for each county where EJI documented racial terror lynchings. This memorial, along with the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration will open in Montgomery, Alabama with a ceremony on the evening of **April 27**, following a two day conference on justice.

Myoyu Roshi will be traveling to Montgomery to attend this historic event and would welcome anyone who wants to join her on this journey. In the words of EJI director Bryan Stevenson, "our nation's history of racial injustice casts a shadow across the American landscape. This shadow cannot be lifted until we shine the light of truth on the destructive violence that shaped our nation, traumatized people of color, and compromised our commitment to the rule of law and to equal justice." This memorial creates an opportunity for people to come together to bear witness. Thousands are expected for the opening. Please contact Roshi at s.myoyu.andersen@gmail.com if you would be interested in attending as a group.

News from Beloit Zen Community

We meet every Thursday evening from 5-7 PM. The program consists of two periods of zazen with a discussion. BZC has recently teamed up with JOB (Justice Overcoming Borders), whose primary purpose is to "create strong coalitions of ordinary people to powerfully engage and impact public decisions." JOB is a member of the Wisconsin-wide organization WISDOM and focuses on overcoming the root causes of poverty and injustice and building community that crosses all borders used to divide us (such as class, race, gender or religion).

We invite all to attend the screening of the documentary *13th* on **Tuesday, February 6, at 6 PM at the Beloit Public Library**, 605 Eclipse Blvd. The 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution makes it unconstitutional to hold someone a slave, with one exception --- people who are incarcerated. Please visit JOB's website for more information about the film screening and JOB at www.justiceovercomingborders.org

WISDOM has announced a **Race to Justice Campaign** focused on Criminal Justice reform in Wisconsin. This campaign includes: a series of local trainings and organizational meetings; forums for Wisconsin gubernatorial candidates to make their positions on criminal justice reform known; and canvassing to get Wisconsin voters out. For sangha members interested in learning more, there will be a training offered in Madison, WI on **April 11** (9 AM – 1 PM). Please let Myoyu Roshi know if you are interested in participating.

Week of Service – July 21-28 2018

At Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation with Simply Smiles.

A wonderful opportunity to spend a week in LaPlant, South Dakota helping with projects around the community and helping staff with the summer camp for Lakota children at the community center. Last summer, we took the children to Crazy Horse Memorial, swam in the Missouri River, learned some traditional Lakota games and more. Also an opportunity to meet other Zen Peacemakers from around the world, participate in council and do some sitting, too.

This week of service affords an opportunity to experience the sacred Lakota land and the people who call it home. For more information or to register, please visit the Zen Peacemakers International website at <https://zenpeacemakers.org/programs/>



Painting by Martha Ekyo Maezumi

Weekly Schedule at Great Plains Zen Center

Each week, sitting takes place Friday at 5:30 AM (followed by service) and Friday evening at 7 PM. On Saturdays, there is service at 8:30 AM followed by two periods of zazen starting at 9AM. During retreats, Saturday morning sitting is open to those not attending the retreat with zazen beginning at 9:15. Once per month, we have an **Introduction to Zen Practice Workshop** in place of the regular Saturday AM schedule. See article below for dates.

Also, the **Gate of Sweet Nectar** ceremony and **Fusatsu** (Renewal of the Vows ceremony) will take place on these dates: **2/16** Fusatsu; **3/9** Fusatsu; **4/15** GSN. All are welcome to all of these ceremonies. *Please check our Facebook page or website for other special events at Great Plains Zen Center.*

Weekly Schedule in Palatine at CCUU

Zazen (Zen meditation) is held every Sunday at 7:00 PM at Countryside Church - Unitarian Universalist, 1025 N. Smith Road, in Palatine, Illinois. We welcome new friends to join us any Sunday. A standard schedule includes a 30-minute period of zazen, 10 minutes of kinhin (walking meditation) and a second 30-minute period of zazen. One Sunday sitting every other month features a *teisho* (a formal dharma talk) by our teacher, Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi, followed by group discussion. Also, the **Gate of Sweet Nectar** ceremony and **Fusatsu** (Renewal of the Vows ceremony) will take place on these dates: **2/25** Fusatsu and **4/1** GSN. All are welcome to all of these ceremonies. *Please check our Facebook page or website for other special events at Great Plains Zen Center.*

Once a month, members and friends are invited to gather before sitting at **6:15 pm** for informal **Tea and Chat** in Palatine. These events offer an opportunity for newcomers and “regulars” alike to get to know—and share with—one another. Please see the calendar for specific dates for teas.

Introduction to Zen Practice Workshops

Great Plains Zen Center will continue to hold monthly Introductory Workshops in Monroe and at Countryside Unitarian Church, 1025 N. Smith Road, Palatine, Illinois. Each workshop provides basic, practical information including how to do zazen (Zen meditation), how to practice at home and throughout the day, the aims of practice, and what opportunities for additional or more advanced practice are offered at GPZC.

- Workshops in **Palatine** (Illinois) will be held Saturdays, **February 24**, **March 10** and **April 28**, and run from 8:30-11:30 AM, followed by an informal lunch.

- A Workshop at **GPZC** (Wisconsin) will be held Saturday, **February 10** (no Workshop will be held in March or April). Workshops run from 8:30-11:30 AM.

The cost for each workshop is \$25 per person (\$15 for students and seniors; free for repeating participants).

Visit <http://greatplainszen.org/workshops> to register, or call us at (608) 325-6248. Please note that workshops are held in two different locations (Palatine, Illinois and Monroe, Wisconsin). **Be sure to note the location carefully when registering.**

Membership in the Great Plains Zen Center

There are four levels of membership in the Sangha of the Great Plains Zen Center: **Practicing Membership** (\$50 per month) is for anyone who will be practicing zazen with the sangha on a regular, weekly basis. Practicing Members receive a discounted rate for retreats. **Affiliate Membership** (\$30 per month) is for sangha members who live at a greater distance from the regular sittings, and who are not able to attend on a regular basis. **Friend of GPZC** (any amount per year) is for anyone who wishes to support the Zen Center and be included in all special communications. **Sustaining Membership** is for anyone committing to any amount, \$75 and above, per month.

Any of these levels of dues can be submitted at our website:

<http://greatplainszen.org/membership/dues>

Membership helps deepen one’s commitment to practice, helps support the center and helps make the practice available to more people now and in the future. Please join us.

Great Plains Zen Center now on Facebook

Please visit and **like** our *public page*, **Great Plains Zen Center**: <http://www.facebook.com/GreatPlainsZenCenter/>.

There, we will post updates on events and schedules and other important information.

You can also request to join our **GPZC Sangha group**: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/897271090403374/>

You can also follow Myoyu Roshi on Twitter @MyoyuA, for social action posts.

And visit our *website*, <http://www.greatplainszen.org> for pages covering the following topics: Starting Zen Practice, Workshops, Retreats, Serving Our Community, Zen Peacemaker Order and a page for children—and much more. You can also learn about our teacher, Myoyu Roshi, and our various locations. We recommend you visit our website periodically for current information about all of our upcoming activities, and registration links for new events.

Contact Us

By phone: (608) 325-6248

By e-mail: gpzc@greatplainszen.org

Our postal mailing addresses:

W77962 Falk Rd • Monroe, WI 53566

PO Box 2077 • Palatine, IL 60078-2077

Find out more about the Great Plains Zen Center on the web at: <http://www.greatplainszen.org> and <http://www.facebook.com/GreatPlainsZenCenter/>

Great Plains Zen Center – Myoshinji (Subtle Mind Temple) – Monroe, Wisconsin

W77962 Falk Rd • Monroe, WI • 608-325-6248

February 2018

@ 2/3 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #3 10:30-1:00</i> * 2/16: <i>Day of Reflection; Fusatsu @ 7:00 PM</i> + 2/18 <i>Soil Class</i>				1	2 5:30 a Zazen & service 7 pm Zazen	3 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen 10:30a WURJ
4	5	6 6 pm FILM: “13th” @ Beloit Public Library	7	8 5pm Zazen (BZC)	9 5:30 a Zazen & service 7 pm Zazen	10 8:30 am Intro Workshop
11	12	13	14	15 5pm Zazen (BZC)	16* 5:30 a Zazen & service Zazenkai	17 9:00a Zazen Zazenkai
18 Zazenkai + 1:00-3:00 <i>Soil Class</i>	19	20	21	22 5pm Zazen (BZC)	23 5:30 a Zazen & service 7 pm Zazen	24 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen
25	26	27	28	“BZC” denotes Beloit Zen Community events at Lutheran Atonement Church, 901 Harrison St., Beloit, WI.		

March 2018

@ 3/3 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #4 10:30-1:00</i> * 3/9: <i>Day of Reflection; Fusatsu @ 7:00 PM</i> + 3/11 <i>Soil Class -</i>				1 5pm Zazen (BZC)	2 5:30 a Zazen & Service 7 pm Zazen	3 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen 10:30a WURJ
4	5	6	7	8 5pm Zazen (BZC)	9* 5:30 a Zazen & Service 7 pm Fusatsu; Zazen	10 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen
11 + 1:00-3:00 <i>Soil Class</i>	12	13	14	15 5pm Zazen (BZC)	16 5:30a Zazen & Service Sesshin	17 9:00a Zazen Sesshin
18 Sesshin	19	20	21	22 5pm Zazen (BZC)	23 (closed)	24 (closed)
25	26	27	28	29 5pm Zazen (BZC)	30 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	31 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen

April 2018

1 *	2	3	4	5 5pm Zazen (BZC)	6 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	7 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen 10:30a WURJ
8 <i>12-2pm Buddha's Birthday</i>	9	10	11	12 5pm Zazen (BZC) Sesshin	13 5:30a Zazen & Service Sesshin	14 9:00a Zazen Sesshin
15 Sesshin 9AM GSN	16	17	18	19 5pm Zazen (BZC)	20 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	21 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen
22	23	24	25 BW-AL	26 5pm Zazen (BZC) BW-AL	27 (closed) BW-AL	28 (closed) BW-AL
29 BWR	30	* 4/1: <i>Day of Reflection</i> 4/7 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #5 10:30-1:00</i> 4/8: <i>Buddha's Birthday; 4/15 Gate of Sweet Nectar</i> 4/25-29: BW-AL = <i>Bearing Witness, Montgomery, Alabama</i>				

Great Plains Zen Center – Countryside Unitarian Church – Palatine, Illinois

1025 N Smith Rd • Palatine, IL • 847-274-4793

February 2018

@ 2/3 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #3 10:30-1:00</i> * 2/16: <i>Day of Reflection</i> + 2/25: <i>Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony</i>				1	2	3 <i>10:30a WURJ @</i>
4 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 <i>6:15 Tea 7:00 pm Zazen</i>	12	13	14	15	16 * <i>Zazenkai</i>	17 <i>Zazenkai</i>
18 <i>Zazenkai</i> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	19	20	21	22	23	24 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
25 <i>7 pm Zazen; GSN+</i>	26	27	28			

March 2018

@ 3/3 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #4 10:30-1:00</i> * 3/9: <i>Day of Reflection</i>				1	2	3 <i>10:30a WURJ @</i>
4 * <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	5	6	7	8	9 *	10 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
11 <i>7:00 pm Zazen & Teisho</i>	12	13	14	15	16 <i>Sesshin</i>	17 <i>Sesshin</i>
18 <i>Sesshin</i> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 <i>6:15 Tea 7:00 pm Zazen</i>	26	27	28	29	30	31

April 2018

1 * <i>7:00 pm Zazen & Fusatsu</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7 <i>10:30a WURJ @</i>
8 <i>Buddha's Birthday</i> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	9	10	11	12 <i>Sesshin</i>	13 <i>Sesshin</i>	14 <i>Sesshin</i>
15 <i>Sesshin</i> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 <i>6:15 Tea 7:00 pm Zazen</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
29 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	30	* 4/1: <i>Day of Reflection</i> * @ 4/7 <i>Waking Up for Racial Justice – Class #5 10:30-1:00</i> + 4/25-29: <i>BWR = Bearing Witness Retreat in Montgomery, Alabama</i>				