



# Great Plains Zen Center



*Sangha Newsletter*

*August through October 2017*

## **All My Relations (Peaceful Way) Zazenkai – August 25-27**

The devastating effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima (August 6, 1941) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1941), along with the enormous suffering caused by war, genocide and all aggression throughout human history are the inspiration for the “Peaceful Way” retreat. Along with the practices of zazen, service, oryoki and work, which make up our typical sesshin, we incorporate the practice of metta bhavana (lovingkindness meditation).

*As it stands now, few of us realize that a typical “fresh” food item in a North American household typically travels between 1,500 to 2,500 miles.”  
-Jane Goodall, **Harvest for Hope***



This year, we have added another practice: that of eating only foods from our garden or grown locally and products from animals (eggs and milk) who were treated humanely. This practice helps us to become aware of how our food comes to us and where it comes from, rather than just picking items off a supermarket shelf with no sense of the effort or suffering that went into their creation. We hope this will evoke a more intimate understanding of the interdependence of all beings and increase our gratitude and respect for the people, animals and plants that inhabit the earth with us, especially when considering our food choices. The sesshin name “All my Relations” comes from the Lakota understanding of the interdependence and relatedness of all things—in the Lakota language, *Mitakuye Oyasin*.

The cost for this zazenkai is \$75 for all participants. This fee includes lodging and all meals. Part time participation is allowed. Register at <http://www.greatplainszen.org/node/226>

## **Religious and Spiritual Life Fair – August 27 Including Home-cooked Potluck Feast**

Great Plains Zen Center will be participating in an interfaith community gathering organized by Bill Conover, director of the Spiritual Life Program at Beloit College. Held at **Beloit College**, the fair and dinner will be held **5:00-7:00 PM** on Sunday, August 27. Please let Roshi know if you would like to help at this event. [s.myoyu.andersen@gmail.com](mailto:s.myoyu.andersen@gmail.com).

## **Day of Council Practice – September 16 Saturday, September 16 from 9:30AM to 4:00PM**

We are pleased to present another day-long Council practice open both to those who have taken other Council training and those who are new to it. Please register soon as space fills up quickly.

**What is the practice of council?** *The Way of Council*, by Jack Zimmerman and Gigi Coyle, was published in 1996 and has been instrumental in helping to take Council into the world. Council practice, in its modern form, is a circle form of communication and wisdom sharing practiced by virtually all indigenous peoples around the world. In Council circles, each person learns to offer their personal story from their heart, not their head, and to listen with full attention. There are no fixed leaders, but rather facilitators; the group's emerging spirit and the process itself are the primary guides and everyone in the circle shares responsibility and leadership for what evolves. (From text describing Council at the Ojai Foundation.)

**This council practice day will be co-facilitated by Annie Markovich and Myoyu Roshi.** Annie Markovich completed the Bearing Witness Training Program in 2014-2015 in Krakow, Poland under the guidance of Acharya Fleet Maul and Jared Seide (Director of Center for Council). Acharya Fleet Maul was the first person to introduce Council to the Bearing Witness group in Auschwitz. Myoyu Roshi has received training from Jared Seide and Anne Phillips Seide and others.

**What to expect:** The day will include opportunities to practice Council as well as sharing information about how to facilitate Council – for example, what constitutes a good prompt, embodying stories and dyad work. Lunch and snacks will be provided. Participants may also choose to participate in the Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony at 4:15.

**Logistics:** The Day of Council Practice will take place at Great Plains Zen Center, W7762 Falk Rd., Monroe, WI 53566 and will include a vegetarian lunch. Accommodations on Saturday night are available at Myoshinji free of charge for those who require it. Suggested donation for this training is \$50. Please register on our website at:

<http://www.greatplainszen.org/node/434>

### **Beginner's Mind Sesshin – September 22-24**

Beginner's Mind Sesshin is designed to help those newer to practice learn about all facets of retreat procedures and activities, including taking meals in the formal 3-bowl oryoki style, and participating in daily liturgical services. Because time is set aside for instruction and explanation throughout each day, this is an ideal first retreat experience. The retreat runs Friday evening through Sunday morning, 9/22-24.

The cost for this retreat is \$75 for both members and non-members. This fee includes lodging and all meals. Register at <http://www.greatplainszen.org/node/237>

### **Monroe CROP Hunger Walk – October 8**

Again this year, GPZC is participating in a CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, October 8 starting at 12 PM in Monroe, Wisconsin. The walk is a collaborative effort between a number of Monroe area churches (including GPZC) and Church World Service. We would like to get as many walkers from GPZC as possible. Each walker is responsible for soliciting sponsors who contribute a lump sum or per-mile rate. Walkers can opt for the 2.5-mile or the 5-mile route.

A portion of the money raised is given to various Church World Service projects overseas and the rest goes to local resources, such as Green County Food Pantry or Second Harvest Foodbank (where some of us volunteered in the past). The majority of overseas projects are for refugee assistance, and also for global hunger and disaster relief and recovery operations. This year's focus will be on sanitation projects in Vietnam and Haiti. This is a great way for GPZC members to work with other faith communities to make a difference locally and internationally and to have fun.

### **Honoring the Way of Zazen Sesshin Oct. 13-16**

This October marks the one-year anniversary of the opening of our new zendo for sesshin. Please join us for this 3-day retreat where there will be an emphasis on just sitting, with no dokusan and only one talk on Saturday morning. Register at <http://www.greatplainszen.org/node/330>

### **Tea and Chat Featuring Member Talks**

Our monthly Tea & Chat events in Palatine will now include short talks by sangha members with discussion.

**O-higan**, The Autumnal Equinox, occurs on Friday, September 22 this year. In Japan, the week of the Autumnal Equinox is called prajna week. During this time, we focus especially on the practice of the six paramitas, which are: generosity (dana), precepts (sila), patience (kshanti), effort (virya), concentration (dhyana) and wisdom (prajna).

To honor this tradition, beginning with the Tea and Chat on Sunday, September 17 (in Palatine), members are invited to give a short talk (about 10-15 minutes) on the paramita of their choosing and lead a discussion. This will be a very informal opportunity to share how you work with the paramita in your life. If you would prefer, you could present your experience of the paramita in a creative way – through music or art.

Please don't hesitate to volunteer for this wonderful chance to share and receive our collective wisdom and appreciate each other! Let Myoyu Roshi know which date and paramita you choose. Upcoming tea and chat dates are: Sept. 17 & Oct. 15.



### **Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony Held in July**

Sangha members held the Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony during the July Seven-Day Sesshin. In this ceremony, which is the main liturgy of the Zen Peacemakers, we offer nourishment to those who are forgotten, marginalized and not cared for. The ceremony includes raising the Bodhi Mind, and inviting all those who hunger to partake in a meal to ease their distress. The ceremony also includes reading the names of departed friends and family of sangha members through the years.

This year, we also raised beautiful memorial lanterns to which we attached messages to our loved ones who have passed on. The colorful, star-shaped lanterns glowed in the evening sky, and added a special air to the ceremony.



### **Roshi's August Travels**

Myoyu Roshi has been invited to be a guest lecturer on August 3 at the Mindfulness Discussion Group, part of the Education Justice Project at Danville Correctional Institution, a medium-security facility in Southern Illinois. Roshi will then travel to South Dakota for the Zen Peacemaker week of service (8/5-12) with Simply Smiles at the Cheyenne River Reservation.

Simply Smiles draws communities from around the United States each summer to build houses and support the children and community of local Lakota families at the reservation. You can learn more about Zen Peacemaker Bearing Witness Retreats at <http://zenpeacemakers.org/bw/>



### **On Serving the Community: Follow-Up**

In the February-April Newsletter, I shared about our intention to create more community service opportunities in the Palatine area. Since we have regular sitting in Palatine, we wanted to reach out to support the surrounding community through service. It was felt that doing more service in this locale would also deepen our sangha connections in the Chicago metro area.

I am pleased to share with you that quite a bit of work has now been done to identify service opportunities in Palatine and the surrounding region. Our Service Circle, which includes Myoyu Roshi, Jeff Ryūzan Slepak, Lorrie Chikuin Kountz, and me, has researched organizations in the area that we believe our members can support. Some of these are in Palatine proper and some are in surrounding communities. We tried to focus on those organizations that demonstrated a true need and would welcome individual and/or group support from our members.

The Service Circle has compiled summative information for each organization so that our members can get a feel for opportunities that are available, when support is most needed, and whom to contact to set up service. Information on Palatine Area Service Opportunities can soon be found at <http://www.greatplainszen.org/community> (linked on our homepage as "Serving Our Community.") The intention is that we will soon begin planning group service activities in the Palatine area for which you will be invited to participate, as you are able. When the mind-heart so moves you, individual, self-selected activities are also encouraged. If you have any questions about any of these opportunities, please feel free to contact me at [birdsfan53@yahoo.com](mailto:birdsfan53@yahoo.com).

With bows, Genshin

### **SAVE THE DATES:**

#### **Tiokasin & Jadina Return – November 3-5**

*We are very happy to announce that Tiokasin Ghosthorse and Jadina Lilien will return November 3-5 for another wonderful weekend of spiritual ecology and constellation.* Details are still being worked out, but the weekend will most likely include a talk by Tiokasin on Friday night and a longer workshop on Saturday-Sunday with Jadina and Tiokasin. All events will take place at Great Plains Zen Center in Monroe, WI. If you would like to purchase a copy of their book, *Butterfly Against the Wind*, the Zen Center has a few copies available for sale. Please contact us at: [myoyu.roshi@greatplainszen.org](mailto:myoyu.roshi@greatplainszen.org)

### **SAVE THE DATES:**

#### **Study Group Begins December 2**

*Waking Up to Race and Privilege Study Group begins on Saturday, December 2, 2017.* As Buddhists, we come to observe how creating an "other" leads to a sense of separation in ourselves, disharmony in the community and eventually the entrenchment of systemic prejudice and injustice that is hard to uproot. We are offering a 7-month study group to help those of us socialized as "white" as we investigate white privilege, racism, intersectionality, dominance and other often unacknowledged forces as they impact our thoughts, speech and actions and the communities around us. We hope to provide participants with the tools – through reading, personal reflection and council practice – to combat white supremacy and work toward a just and sustainable society – as we let go of unhelpful views and attitudes in ourselves that prevent us from seeing clearly. Doing this work allows us to move forward in creating true racial justice in the world around us.

***Our first meeting will be Saturday, Dec. 2 from 10:30-1:00 with light refreshments.*** Each month, we will meet for two and a half hours the first Saturday of every month with both online and in-person participation available for each meeting. Between meetings, there will be required readings. The December meeting is open to anyone wanting to decide if the group is a good fit for them. After that, we ask people to commit to participating in all of the remaining 6 monthly sessions so that a cohesive and safe learning environment can be created where this often difficult, awkward, but highly rewarding inquiry can occur. We can change a particular monthly meeting date if agreeable to all group members, so there is some flexibility possible, but we'll aim for the first Saturday of every month. After signing up, you will receive a reading list to be completed prior to the first meeting.

Please contact Myoyu Roshi with questions. Please sign up online at <http://www.greatplainszen.org/node/435> and note that the suggested donation of \$70 is not due until after the December meeting. We will probably create a closed Facebook group to share between meetings and to post news and curriculum for each month.

### **Weekly Schedule at Myoshinji**

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: **8/25** Fusatsu; **8/27** GSN; **9/16** GSN; **9/29** Fusatsu; **10/7** GSN; **10/19** Fusatsu. All are welcome to all of these ceremonies. *Please check our Facebook page or website for other special events at Myoshinji.*

### **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 each month features a *teisho* (a formal dharma talk) by our teacher, Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi, followed by group discussion.

Once a month, members and friends are invited to gather before sitting at **6:15 pm** for informal *Tea and Chat*. 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 these activities. Also see the related article on Page 2.*

### **Introduction to Zen Practice Workshops**

Great Plains Zen Center will continue to hold monthly Introductory Workshops at Countryside Unitarian Church, 1025 N. Smith Road, Palatine, Illinois, and at Myoshinji in Monroe, Wisconsin. 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, **August 19, September 9** and **October 14**, and run from 8:30-11:30 AM, followed by an informal lunch.
- Workshops at **Myoshinji** (Wisconsin) will be held Saturdays, **August 19, September 30** and **October 28**. 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 home, *Myoshinji*, in Monroe, Wisconsin. The site also carries information about all of our upcoming activities, as well as links for registering for events.

### **Contact Us**

By phone: (608) 325-6248

By e-mail: [gpzc@greatplainszen.org](mailto: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

**August 2017**

<i>* Day of Reflection 8/25</i>		1	2	3	4 <i>(closed)</i>	5 <i>(closed)</i>
<i>9/27 Gate of Sweet Nectar 8:30a</i>						
6	7	8	9	10	11 <i>(closed)</i>	12 <i>(closed)</i>
13	14	15	16	17	18:30 a Zazen & service 7 pm Zazen	19 8:30 am <b>Intro Workshop</b>
20	21	22	23	24	<b>25 *</b> <b>Zazenkai</b> 7:00 pm Fusatsu	26 <b>Zazenkai</b> 9:00a Zazen
27 <b>Zazenkai</b> 8:30a GSN	28	29	30	31		

**September 2017**

<i>* Day of Reflection 9/29</i> <i># Day of Council Practice – 9/16 9:30a – 4:00p</i> <i>and Gate of Sweet Nectar at 4:15</i>					1 <i>(closed)</i>	2 <i>(closed)</i>
3	4	5	6	7	8 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	9 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen
<b>10 *</b>	11	12	13	14	15 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	16 9:30 – 4:00 <b>Day of Council</b> <b>Practice; GSN #</b>
17	18	19	20	21	22 <b>Sesshin</b>	23 <b>Sesshin</b> 9:15a Zazen
24 <b>Sesshin</b>	25	26	27	28	29 5:30a Zazen & Fusatsu 7:00 p Zazen	30 8:30 am <b>Intro Workshop</b>

**October 2017**

1	2	3	4	5	6 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	7 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen 9:30a GSN
8 <b>Noon:</b> <b>Crop Walk</b>	9	10	11	12	13 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	14 8:30a Service 9:00a Zazen
15	16	17	18	19 * <b>Sesshin</b> 7:00 pm Fusatsu	20 <b>Sesshin</b>	21 <b>Sesshin</b> 9:15a Zazen
22 <b>Sesshin</b>	23	24	25	26	27 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	28 8:30 am <b>Intro Workshop</b>
29	30	31	<i>* Day of Reflection 10/19</i> <i>10/7 Gate of Sweet Nectar 9:30a</i>			

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

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

**August 2017**

<b>* Day of Reflection 8/25</b>		1	2	3	4	5
6 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 <i>6:15 Tea 7 pm Zazen</i>	14	15	16	17	18	19 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
20 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	21	22	23	24	<b>25 *</b> <i>Zazenkai</i>	26 <i>Zazenkai</i>
27 <b>Zazenkai</b> <i>7 pm Zazen</i>	28	29	30	31		

**September 2017**

<b>* Day of Reflection 9/29</b> <b># Day of Council Practice – 9/16 9:30a – 4:00p @ Myoshinji</b> <b>and Gate of Sweet Nectar at 4:15</b>						1	2
3 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	4	5	6	7	8	9 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>	
10 <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	11	12	13	14	15	16 <b>9:30 – 4:00</b> <b>Day of Council –</b> <b>Myoshinji; GSN#</b>	
17 <i>6:15 Tea 7:00 pm Zazen</i>	18	19	20	21	22 <i>Sesshin</i>	23 <i>Sesshin</i>	
24 <b>Sesshin</b> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	25	26	27	28	<b>29 *</b>	30	

**October 2017**

1 <i>7 pm Zazen</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 <b>CROP Walk WI</b> <i>7:00 pm Zazen</i>	9	10	11	12	13	14 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
15 <i>6:15 Tea 7:00 pm Zazen</i>	16	17	18	<b>19 *</b> <i>Sesshin</i>	20 <i>Sesshin</i>	21 <i>Sesshin</i>
22 <b>Sesshin</b> <i>7 pm Zazen</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 <i>7:00 pm Zazen &amp; Teisho</i>	30	31	<b>* Day of Reflection 10/19</b>			