



# Great Plains Zen Center



*Sangha Newsletter*

*November 2014 through January, 2015*

## Heart of Wisdom Class Continues

Our fall class, **Heart of Wisdom**—exploring the Prajñāparamita Heart Sutra—will continue in November. Remaining Palatine classes at **Countryside Church** will be held on Sunday evenings from 6:00-6:45 PM, **November 2, 16 and 23**. (There will be no class on November 9 due to the zazenkai taking place that weekend.) Remaining classes held at **Myoshinji** in Monroe, Wisconsin are on Saturday mornings from 10:45-11:30, **November 1, 15 and 22**.

## Zazenkai - November 7-9

Our next retreat will be a zazenkai held November 7-9 at Myoshinji. The retreat begins on Friday evening and runs through Sunday morning. Please come and sit with us and enjoy the beautiful fall weather. *The cost of this retreat is \$75 and includes overnight lodging Friday and Saturday nights as well as all meals.*

## Rohatsu Sesshin – December 3-7

Rohatsu will begin Wednesday night, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and end on Sunday morning, December 7 with a special Bodhi Day Service at 7:30 AM during our usual morning service in honor of the Enlightenment of the Buddha. This longer sesshin provides an opportunity for intense and deep practice and all those who feel ready for it are encouraged to attend. In the traditional Mahayana Buddhist calendar, Bodhi Day is December 8th, called Rohatsu in Japanese (literally, the 8th day of the 12th month). Mahayana Buddhists also recognize April 8 as the anniversary of Buddha's birth (Hanamatsuri) and February 15th as Nirvana Day, commemorating the passing of the Buddha from this sphere of teaching. *The cost of this retreat is \$200 for members, \$240 for non-members and includes overnight lodging as well as all meals. Part time participation is acceptable for those who cannot attend the entire sesshin.*

## Retreat dates for 2015:

- Jan 8-11            3-Day Sesshin
- Feb. 6-8            Nirvana Day Zazenkai
- March 13-15        Beginner's Mind Sesshin (2-Day)
- April 16-19        3-Day Sesshin
- May 22-24         Maezumi Roshi Memorial Zazenkai
- June 25-28         Three Day Sesshin
- July 26-8/1         7-Day Sesshin
- August 20-23      Peaceful Way Sesshin (3-Day)
- Sept. 18-20        Beginner's Mind Sesshin (2-Day)
- October 8-11      Bodhidharma Sesshin (3-Day)
- Nov 6-8            Zazenkai
- Dec. 1-6            Rohatsu sesshin (Mon.-Sat.)

*(All retreats are held at Myoshinji in Monroe, Wisconsin)*

## New Year's Zazen

Although it proves challenging to get the Sangha together for zazen on New Year's Eve, we encourage everyone to experience the traditional practice of sitting through the New Year wherever you are. Whether you sit for one half hour from 11:35 to 12:05 or just for a few minutes at midnight, by doing zazen as the New Year begins, you are creating a wonderful beginning for another year of practice. You will also know that many others in our, and other Sanghas around the world are sitting with you at that moment.

## January Three-Day Sesshin – January 8-11

Our first sesshin of the new year is the January 3 day sesshin. It runs Thursday evening, 1/8, through Sunday morning, 1/11. We will honor Dr. Martin Luther King by including daily practice of metta (loving kindness meditation) in the schedule. Winter sesshin offers a special opportunity for quiet, calm practice. *The cost of this retreat is \$150 for members or \$180 for non-members and includes overnight lodging Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights as well as all meals.*

## Great Plains Zen Center Becomes a Zen Peacemaker Order Member Group

The Great Plains Zen Center is happy to announce that we are now a **Zen Peacemaker Order Member Group**. This means that in addition to all of our current activities, we will offer Zen Peacemaker Order related events and trainings. The Zen Peacemaker Order is an organization supporting the vision and inspiration for Socially Engaged Buddhism throughout the world with 83 affiliates in 12 countries on five continents.

Zen Peacemakers Organization was established by Myoyu Roshi's most famous Dharma brother, Bernie Glassman, who is the first Dharma Successor of Maezumi Roshi. The Zen Peacemakers Family includes communities started by successors of Bernie, communities started by their successors and also spiritual groups from other lineages and traditions who want to find affinity in their commitment to social action. The organization is now being re-envisioned by a group of founding teachers in the United States and Europe.

Please check our website's Zen Peacemakers page for upcoming trainings and events offered by Great Plains Zen Center as a member order:

[http://www.greatplainszen.org/zen\\_peacemakers](http://www.greatplainszen.org/zen_peacemakers)

This will include our Day of Reflection & Month of Everyday Practice available to all as a home practice starting in December 2014 (see following article). For information about Zen Peacemaker events worldwide, visit the ZPO website: <http://zenpeacemakers.org/>.

### Day of Reflection & Month of Everyday Practice

Beginning in December 2014, we will offer an opportunity for anyone who wishes to deepen their commitment to manifesting the precepts in their everyday lives. The program will have two complementary parts:

- 1) **Day of Reflection:** On the day that we have Fusatsu (usually the first or second Sunday of the month), participants will perform their own personal ceremony of atonement and make an intentional commitment to following the 16 Bodhisattva precepts throughout the day. A simple format to follow (which can be modified if desired) will be posted on the Zen Peacemaker page of the GPZC website. At the end of the day, participants can join us at Countryside Church in Palatine for our regular Fusatsu ceremony (which is the traditional renewing of the vows ceremony), which will also include an ending dedication for the Day of Reflection. Those who cannot attend the evening Fusatsu can chant the ending dedication in a personal ceremony.
- 2) **Month of Everyday Practice:** Also on our ZPO page will be a monthly post about one particular precept. The various forms and implications of the precept will be discussed. Anyone who wishes to take on the practice can focus on that precept in-depth for the rest of the month. This is an opportunity to really dig into what it means to manifest practice in daily life, with the various formulations of the precepts as guides. Precepts are in essence aspects of our lives and each one is a unique lens offering us a view of our ever changing and interdependent life together.

The first **Day of Reflection** will be **Sunday, December 14.**

More information coming soon on our webpage:

[http://www.greatplainszen.org/zen\\_peacemakers](http://www.greatplainszen.org/zen_peacemakers).

### GPZC Volunteers at Northern IL Food Bank

In an effort to fulfill the precept of “Doing good for others”, and practicing *dana paramita* – generosity & giving of ourselves – we continue to offer opportunities for small groups of sangha members to do volunteer work in the Monroe and the Palatine/Chicago areas.

**Our next volunteer date is January 31 from 9:00-11:30 AM at the Northern Illinois Food Bank in Geneva (about 30 minutes from Palatine, near Elgin).** If you would like to join us for this event, please email Ryūzan at:

[ryuzan@greatplainszen.org](mailto:ryuzan@greatplainszen.org)

Recently, on September 6, volunteers worked a morning shift at the Northern Illinois Food Bank warehouse in Geneva, helping in the preparation process for the Food Bank’s sorting, processing and delivery to 800 distribution sites.

To sign yourself up for other dates at NIFB, visit this site:

<http://solvehungertoday.civicore.com/NIFB/index.php?section=volOpportunities&action=calendar>

### Hakuin Zenji Memorial December 11

Hakuin Ekaku Zenji (1686-1768) is an important figure in our Great Plains Zen lineage. He is credited with revitalizing Japanese Zen after 300 years of decline. It is his Rinza lineage that includes Mumon Yamada Roshi, Daiun Sogaku Harada Roshi, and Haku’un Yasutani Roshi—one of Taizan Maezumi Roshi’s three teachers.



Hakuin emphasized the importance of koan study as a vital path to awakening (*satori*; *kensho*), and the necessity to deepen and mature initial realization through continued practice. He developed a five-part system of koan study that has had great influence on the Japanese Rinza school of zen. That influence extends to our White Plum lineage through Maezumi Roshi.

Hakuin recounted the years he spent with the koan *Mu*: “Night and day I did not sleep; I forgot both to eat and rest. Suddenly a great doubt manifested itself before me. It was as though I were frozen solid in the midst of an ice sheet extending tens of thousands of miles. A purity filled my breast and I could neither go forward nor retreat.” Days later, at the sound of the temple bell, he had *kensho*. “I was suddenly transformed. It was if a sheet of ice had been smashed or a jade tower had fallen with a crash.” All his former doubts “vanished as though ice had melted away.” Many subsequent awakenings followed, and at the age of 42, he wrote, “At long last I have penetrated into the heart of this great matter. What is enlightenment? A matter of doing good—benefiting others by giving them the gift of the Dharma teaching.”

Hakuin Zenji was known as an outstanding teacher, and famously used painting and calligraphy to create “visual Dharma”. There was a saying in Hakuin’s home province of Suruga: “Suruga province has two things of surpassing greatness, Mount Fuji and Priest Hakuin.” On December 11, we observe the memorial of this great ancestor teacher.

### **Thanking Those Who Support Our Practice**

In recognition of all those who support our practice in so many ways, we have added the following words to our Nenju service, done at the close of each retreat:

*“We are grateful for these buildings, grounds, equipment and forms which protect the Dharma and for those who have built, maintained, practiced, and contributed to them. We vow to endlessly continue practice for the sake of the Dharma, the Sangha in the ten directions and for all sentient beings. We are grateful for our ancestor teachers and for all those who have practiced before us, those who practice with us and those who will come after us. We are grateful for all those who support our practice by caring for our loved ones and taking on other responsibilities so that we can be here. We vow to recognize how precious our time for practice is and not waste it by practicing casually. We further vow to bring the energy and clarity from this sesshin practice into our lives...”*



### **In Memoriam: Beloved Greyhound “Dazzle”** (March 27, 2000 – September 12, 2014)

We are sorry to announce that our wonderful temple greyhound, Dazzle, died this September at the age of 14 ½ . Dazzle began his life as a racing greyhound, racing 9 times in Palm Beach, Florida, with one second place, before being placed in his first home by Race the Wind, a rescue organization in Kansas. We adopted Dazzle from Greyhound Pets of America at the age of 10. He was clocked at 32 miles per hour at the GPA radar run at the age of 11! Dazzle loved welcoming guests to the Zen Center and listening to chanting. He knew which chants meant the end of zazen and thus his opportunity to go for a walk. He will be remembered for his “smile,” his gentle, affectionate and gracious personality, and his bell-striking tail. He is survived by his shepherd-mix adopted “sister” Ava. Run on, run free, dear Dazzle!

### **Registration for GPZC Events**

To register, for GPZC events, please *register/pay online at [www.greatplainszen.org](http://www.greatplainszen.org)*. Please register for any *sesshin*, *zazenkai* or workshop *at least 1 week prior* to the start. This allows us to assign positions and arrange other logistics for the event. 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 \$35 non-refundable fee.

### **Weekly Schedule at Myoshinji**

Early morning sitting takes place at Myoshinji at 5:30 AM on Fridays with a morning service following. Evening zazen takes place Fridays at 7 PM. The Saturday schedule includes Zazen at 9 AM followed by talk or discussion as well as an optional morning service at 8:30 AM for those who wish to learn traditional Soto Zen Buddhist liturgy. This provides an opportunity to learn the service positions we do during sesshin and practice them on a regular basis.

### **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.

Each month, the Zen Center holds *Fusatsu*, the *Renewal of the Vows* ceremony (in place of the second zazen period). Everyone is welcome whether or not they have formally received the Buddhist Vows. One Sunday sitting each month features a *teisho* (a formal dharma talk) by our teacher, Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi, followed by group discussion. Also, once a month, members and friends are invited to gather at 6:15 pm where we will alternate between *Council* discussion – or informal *Tea and Chat* prior to sitting. This is an opportunity to just visit and for newcomers and “regulars” alike to get to know one another in an informal setting. *Please see the calendar for specific dates for these activities*

### **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, November 15, December 13 and January 24, and run from 8:30-11:30 AM, followed by an informal lunch.
- Workshop at **Myoshinji** (Wisconsin) will be held Saturdays, December 13 and January 17 (no workshop in November). 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 (847) 274-4793 or (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 sesshin (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.

**Contact Us**

By phone: (847) 274-4793  
Myoshinji (Monroe, Wisconsin): (608) 325-6248  
By e-mail: [gpzc@greatplainszen.org](mailto:gpzc@greatplainszen.org)

*Note our NEW mailing address:*

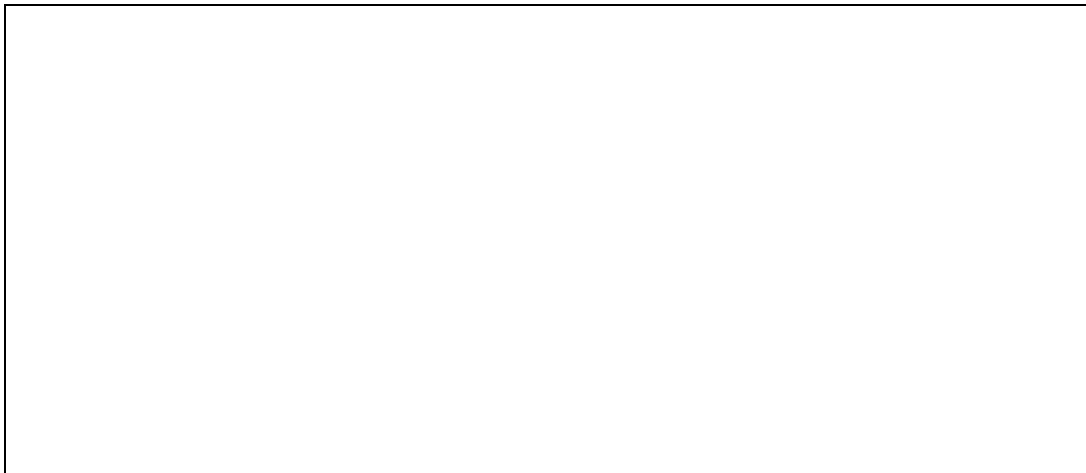
PO Box 2077  
Palatine, IL 60078-2077

Find out more about the Great Plains Zen Center on the web at: [greatplainszen.org](http://greatplainszen.org)

**Check out our website: <http://www.greatplainszen.org>**

If you haven't opened the GPZC website recently, please visit! You'll find pages covering the following topics: Starting Zen Practice, Community, Workshops, Retreats, 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.

**GPZC  
P.O. Box 2077  
Palatine, IL 60078-2077**



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

W7762 Falk Rd • Monroe, WI • 608-325-6248

**November 2014**

<i>*HOW = Heart Of Wisdom Class, 10:45-11:30 am</i>						1 <b>*HOW</b> 8:30am Service 9:00am Zazen
2	3	4	5	6	7 <b>Zazenkai</b>	8 <b>Zazenkai</b> 9:00am Zazen
9 <b>Zazenkai</b>	10	11	12	13	14 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	15 <b>*HOW</b> 8:30am Service 9:00am Zazen
16	17	18	19	20	21 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	22 <b>*HOW</b> 8:30am Service 9:00am Zazen
23	24	25	26	27 <b>Thanksgiving</b> (closed)	28 (closed)	29 (closed)

**December 2014**

30 (Nov)	1	2	3 <b>Sesshin</b>	4 <b>Sesshin</b>	5 <b>Sesshin</b>	6 <b>Sesshin</b> 9:00am Zazen
7 <b>Sesshin</b>	8 <b>Bodhi Day</b>	9	10	11	12 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	13 8:30 am <b>Intro</b> <b>Workshop</b>
14	15	16	17	18	19 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	20 8:30am Service 9am Zazen
21	22	23	24	25 <b>Christmas</b> (closed)	26 (closed)	27 (closed)
28	29	30	31			

**January 2015**

				1 <b>New Year's Day</b>	2 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00 p Zazen	3 8:30am Service 9am Zazen
4	5	6	7	8 <b>Sesshin</b>	9 <b>Sesshin</b>	10 <b>Sesshin</b> 9:00am Zazen,
11 <b>Sesshin</b>	12	13	14	15	16 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	17 8:30 am <b>Intro</b> <b>Workshop</b>
18	19	20	21	22	23 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	24 8:30am Service 9:00am Zazen
25	26	27	28	29	30 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	31

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

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

**November 2014**

*HOW = Heart Of Wisdom Class, 6:00-6:45 pm						1
2 <b>6:00 HOW</b> 7:00 pm Zazen & Fusatsu	3	4	5	6	7 Zazenkai	8 Zazenkai
9 Zazenkai 7 pm Zazen	10	11	12	13	14	15 8:30 am Intro Workshop
16 <b>6:00 HOW</b> 7:00p Zazen	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 <b>6:00 HOW</b> 7:00p Zazen & Teisho	24	25	26	27 Thanksgiving	28	29

**December 2014**

30 (Nov) 7 pm Zazen	1	2	3 Sesshin	4 Sesshin	5 Sesshin	6 Sesshin
7 Sesshin 7:00p Zazen	8	9	10	11	12	13 8:30 am Intro Workshop
14 7:00 pm Zazen & Fusatsu	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 7 pm Zazen	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27
28 6:15p Tea 7:00p Zazen & Teisho	29	30	31			

**January 2015**

				1 New Year's Day	2	3
4 7:00 pm Zazen & Fusatsu	5	6	7	8 Sesshin	9 Sesshin	10 Sesshin
11 Sesshin 7 pm Zazen	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 6:15p Council; 7:00p Zazen & Teisho	19	20	21	22	23	24 8:30 am Intro Workshop
25 7:00p Zazen	26	27	28	29	30	31