



Great Plains Zen Center



Sangha Newsletter

February through April 2011

Nirvana Day Zazenkai – February 18 - 20

Our annual observance of Nirvana Day, commemorating the day Shakyamuni Buddha passed from this realm of teaching and entered parinirvana at the age of 80, will take place during the February Zazenkai. This zazenkai begins on Friday evening (2/18), and runs through Sunday morning (2/20), and will include a special service on Saturday, February 19.



Buddha entering Nirvana.

Nirvana Day is traditionally observed on February 15.

Three-Day Sesshin – March 31 - April 3

Our March retreat, held at Myoshinji will begin on Thursday evening (3/31) and run through Sunday Morning (4/3). Please refer to registration instructions below for this and all retreats.

Beginner's Mind Sesshin – May 6-8

In September, Great Plains offered its first *Beginners Mind Sesshin*. The event was a great success, appreciated by all attendees. We will hold our second one this May. Please see the full article on page 3.

Registration for GPZC Events

Please register for any sesshin, zazenkai, or workshop *at least one 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.

The cost for each zazenkai is \$75. The cost for each 3-day sesshin is \$150 for current Practicing Members; \$180 for others. Students may attend any *sesshin* on a part-time basis (\$50 per day for current Practicing Members; \$60 per day for others). To register, please *register/pay online at www.greatplainszen.org*

Summer 2011: a Month-Long Intensive Program

This summer, Great Plains Zen Center will offer a month-long residential intensive training program followed by a seven-day sesshin. The intensive will run from Monday, June 20, through Thursday, July 14, 2011. The seven-day sesshin will start Friday night, July 15, and conclude on Friday morning, July 22. While participation in the entire month intensive is encouraged for those who are able, part time participation is available.

The intensive offers a unique opportunity to experience monastic-style practice for a month or even for a few days under the guidance of resident teacher Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi. The program takes place at Myoshinji, our retreat center in rural Green County, Wisconsin, about 2-1/2 hours from Chicago and about an hour from Madison, Beloit or Rockford. Our upcoming brochure will give details, but the following are some of the program highlights:

- A full daily schedule of zazen (Zen meditation), services and work practice, with instruction by senior students and Myoyu Roshi.
- Delicious vegetarian meals served in traditional eating bowl ceremony (oryoki).
- Guided study of a Buddhist text throughout the month.
- Yoga classes taught by a certified yoga instructor.
- Participation in a community service project.
- Guest speakers and workshops on a variety of Zen-related topics.
- A celebration of the intensity and breadth of Zen practice.

Be sure to check our website for further information and registration materials in the coming months!

Our guest speakers and presenters include these regional Zen teachers...

Rev. Zuiko Redding is the resident teacher at Cedar Rapids Zen Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She practiced Zen Buddhism at Milwaukee Zen Center with Rev. Tozen Akiyama and at Minnesota Zen Center with Rev. Dainin Katagiri in the 1980s. In January, 1992, she received novice ordination in Japan from Tsugen Narasaki, Roshi. She practiced under his direction at Zuioji Senmon Sodo and its sub-temple Shogoji until her return to the U.S. in 1997. She was certified to teach (dharma transmission) in the Soto tradition by Rev. Narasaki in July, 1996. She also holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

<http://www.cedarrapidszencenter.org>

(Continued...)

(...Summer 2011 continued)

Elihu Genmyo Smith began his Zen training in 1974 at the Zen Studies Society in New York with Soen Nakagawa, Roshi and Eido Shimano, Roshi. He continued his training at Zen Center of Los Angeles, where he was ordained a Buddhist priest by Hakuyu Maezumi, Roshi in 1979. After completing formal koan study with Maezumi Roshi in 1984, he continued his training with Charlotte Joko Beck at Zen Center of San Diego. Genmyo received Dharma transmission (shiho) and authorization to teach from Joko in 1992. He is a co-founder of the Ordinary Mind Zen School and currently lives in Champaign, Illinois, where he is resident teacher of the Prairie Zen Center. Genmyo is the author of *Ordinary Life, Wondrous Life*, published by the Prairie Zen Center. <http://www.prairiezen.org>

Tonen O'Connor is a Soto Zen Buddhist priest and has been the resident priest at the Milwaukee Zen Center since 2001. She received ordination from Tozen Akiyama in 1994; dharma transmission in 1999 and in 2000 performed the ceremony of zuise at Eiheiji and Sojiji, head temples of the Soto School in Japan. She trained in Japan at Shogoji, Hosshinji and Hokyoji. For nearly twelve years she has worked extensively with inmates within the Wisconsin correctional system, serves on the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Religious Practices Advisory Committee. Tonen is active in interfaith programs. Prior to entering the Zen world, Rev. O'Connor had a 40-year career in professional theater. <http://www.milwaukeezencenter.org>

We are also pleased to present these speakers on Zen-related topics...

Dr. James Palmer, Program Director, Creek Connections, has served as chair of the Environmental Science Department at Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania from 2002-2007. He holds a PhD from the University of Texas, Austin, in population biology. In 1995, Dr. Palmer, along with colleague Dr. Mark Lord of the Department of Geology founded Creek Connections, an innovative environmental education program involving collaboration between Allegheny College and public school districts in western Pennsylvania and New York to encourage natural science education through hands-on field and laboratory experiences. In his talk, Dr. Palmer will share with us how this multi-award-winning program can help us gain a deeper awareness, appreciation and stewardship of the earth's water resources. We will also have a hands-on experience surveying aquatic biodiversity and chemistry in the stream adjacent to our own property. <http://creekconnections.allegheny.edu>

Natalie Gummer, Ph.D.: Reading and Being Read by Mahayana Sutras. Dr. Gummer is an Associate Professor in the Religious Studies Program at Beloit College. She holds a doctorate from Harvard University and is co-editor of *Defining Buddhism(s): A Reader*, and the author of several

articles on Buddhist literary culture and pedagogical approaches to the study of religion.

John Gendo Wolff, senior priest and long-time student of Myoyu Andersen, Roshi, will present ***Following the Fragrant Grasses: A Zen Writing Workshop***. Gendo is an award-winning author of essays and poetry. His publications include work in *Beneath A Single Moon: Buddhism in Contemporary American Poetry* (Shambhala/Random House), and many literary magazines. He is also Professor of Humanities at West Shore Community College in Scottville, Michigan, where he teaches courses in literature, Creative Writing, and, most recently, Mindful Living. He is also the director of the Great Wave Zen Sangha in Ludington, Michigan. <http://greatwave.org>

Matt Shingetsu Hellige: Mindful Cooking. Shingetsu has been a student of Myoyu Roshi for ten years. He is the tenzo (head cook) at GPZC and frequently cooks at sesshin and zazenkai. He leads zazen at the Logan Square Zendo on Sundays. <http://logansquarezen.org/>

Dr. David Kaiun Beighley: Buddhist Approaches to Working With Addiction. Dr. David Beighley is the owner of Beighley Consulting Associates, PLLC, a Relational Consulting Firm in Grand Haven, Michigan, specializing in the treatment of family systems and impaired professionals. He is a provider for the Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program and the Health Professionals Recovery Program. He is the recipient of the U.S Chamber of Commerce "Best Marriage and Family Therapist-Grand Haven, Michigan" in 2009 and 2010. He is the author of the book, *Dancing With Yesterday's Shadows: When Where You've Been is Keeping You From Where You Want To Go*. The book is accompanied by a three-hour video series and workbook by the same name. David is the co-founder of the White Sands Zen Center in Spring Lake, Michigan.

Dr. Alfred "Roc" Ordman, a biochemistry professor at Beloit College since 1977. Dr. Ordman has sitting regularly at Myoshinji in Monroe for three years. He has been using meditation in his consciousness and nutrition classes since 2007. Roc will be discussing the scientific evidence about what meditation does to save time, promote health, bring real success, and transform lives He will include an update on the important work done by Dr. Richard Davidson, Director of the NIH-sponsored Center for Meditation at the UW Hospital, involving brain imaging of experienced and novice meditators. <http://chemistry.beloit.edu/Ordman>

Cathy Hauck of ABC Yoga is a **certified yoga instructor with Yoga Alliance**. Her classes are dynamic, rejuvenating and fun, and emphasize proper physical alignment and breath awareness. Ms. Hauck encourages her students to work within their abilities to find ease and stability in each pose. The ABC Yoga approach offers tools you can use in your daily life to create a balance between body, mind and spirit. www.abcyogamonroe.com

Why are we including yoga this summer?

By Cathy Hauck of ABC Yoga, Monroe, WI

Yoga offers many physical and mental benefits that can be very helpful before a sitting/meditation practice. Below are listed just a few of these benefits...

- Increases flexibility and muscle joint mobility
- Improves body posture
- Reinforces the strength of the spine
- Centers attention
- Increases body and breath awareness
- Refreshes the body by relieving muscle strain
- Relaxes the mind and body

In a way, yoga is a form of “moving meditation.” It harmonizes all the energies of your body and mind. If you have never tried yoga before then you are in for a treat. Don’t worry; you do not need to be super flexible to try yoga. Yoga works for everyone, including absolute beginners.

Beginner’s Mind Sesshin – May 6 - 8

Those who are in the early stages of their practice are encouraged to join us for our *Beginner’s Mind Sesshin*, May 6-8. 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.

This sesshin will be conducted at Myoshinji in Monroe, Wisconsin. Registration for this—and all other retreats—may be done online at www.greatplainszen.org. The cost of this retreat is \$75 and includes overnight lodging Friday & Saturday, as well as all meals.

GPZC Switches to Green Cleaning Products

As part of our vows to avoid harming living things, to refrain from causing unnecessary suffering and to avoid being careless and selfish with resources, GPZC has switched to environmentally friendly cleaning products. By using these very concentrated, but non-toxic cleaners in reusable spray bottles, we are eliminating much waste from landfills. The products are not tested on animals and are also less likely to be problematic for those members with chemical sensitivities and allergies. The company making the products has also eliminated its own carbon footprint to achieve certification as a Climate Neutral company. More information about these and other products can be found on this website: www.mayallbeingsbehealthy.myshaklee.com

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 they have formally taken the Buddhist Vows or not. Upcoming Fusatsu dates are February 27, March 20 and April 17.

One Sunday sitting each month will feature teisho (a formal dharma talk) by our teacher, Susan Myoyu Andersen, Roshi, followed by group discussion. Upcoming teisho are scheduled for February 6, March 6 and April 10.

Also, once a month, members and friends are invited to gather for informal **Talk & Tea** at 6:15. (2/20; 3/27; 4/24)

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. Attendance at an introductory workshop is required of anyone who would like to become a member of the Great Plains Zen Center.

Workshops in **Palatine** (Illinois) will be held Saturdays, February 5, March 26 and April 23, and run from 8:30-11:30 AM, followed by an informal lunch.

Workshops at **Myoshinji** (Wisconsin) will be held Saturdays, February 26, March 19 and April 9. 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.

Weekly Schedule at Myoshinji Updated

Myoshinji’s weekly schedule now includes these opportunities: Morning zazen, 5:30–6:00 AM every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; evening zazen each Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:00 PM (followed by discussion and ending about 8:30 PM on Tuesdays); Saturday morning zazen continues to be offered at 9:00 AM, followed by teisho, zendo position instruction or discussion, ending about 11:00 AM.

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 Member**, is for anyone committing to any amount, \$75 and above, per month.

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

GPZC
P.O. Box 3362
Barrington, IL 60011

Contact Us

By phone: (847) 274-4793

By e-mail: gpzc@greatplainszen.org

Myoshinji (Monroe, WI): (608) 325-6248

Visit Our Web Site

Find out more about the Great Plains Zen Center on the web at: greatplainszen.org

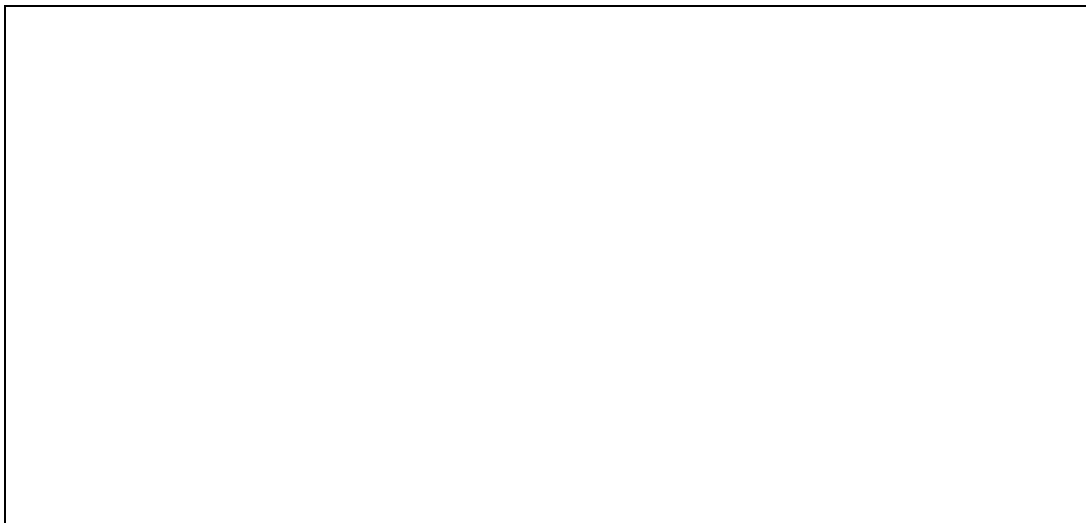
Other Services Offered by Great Plains Zen Center

Myoyu Roshi is an ordained Buddhist priest and can perform weddings, baby blessings, memorials and funerals, and home visits for those members who are seriously ill. She is also a Reiki practitioner. For further information about these services, please contact myoyu.roshi@greatplainszen.org

Upcoming Dates

The following are planned dates for future retreats. Please visit the web site greatplainszen.org to confirm these as the dates approach. Circumstances sometimes lead to changes in selected dates.

- May 6-8 Beginner's Mind Sesshin
- June 20-July 14 Residential Intensive Training
- July 15-22 Seven-day Sesshin



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

608-325-6248

February 2011

		1 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	2 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	3 5:30 am Zazen	4	5 9am Zazen
6	7	8 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	9 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	10 5:30 am Zazen	11	12 9am Zazen
13	14	15 Nirvana Day 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	16 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	17 5:30 am Zazen	18 Zazenkai	19 Zazenkai 9am Zazen
20 Zazenkai	21 <i>Presidents Day</i>	22 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	23 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	24 5:30 am Zazen	25	26 8:30 am Intro Workshop
27	28					

March 2011

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

April 2011

3 Sesshin	4	5 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	6 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	7 5:30 am Zazen	8	9 8:30 am Intro Workshop
10	11	12 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	13 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	14 5:30 am Zazen	15	16 9am Zazen
17	18	19 Passover 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	20 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	21 5:30 am Zazen	22 <i>Good Friday</i>	23 9am Zazen
24 <i>Easter</i>	25	26 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen & Discussion	27 5:30 am Zazen 7:00p Zazen	28 5:30 am Zazen	29	30 9am Zazen

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

847-274-4793

February 2011

		1	2	3	4	5 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
6 <i>7 pm Zazen & Teisho</i>	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 <i>7 pm Zazen</i>	14	15 <i>Nirvana Day</i>	16	17	18 <i>Zazenkai</i>	19 <i>Zazenkai</i>
20 Zazenkai <i>6:15 Tea 7 pm Zazen</i>	21 <i>Presidents Day</i>	22	23	24	25	26
27 <i>7 pm Zazen & Fusatsu</i>	28					

March 2011

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

April 2011

3 <i>Sesshin 7 pm Zazen</i>	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 <i>7 pm Zazen & Teisho</i>	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 <i>7 pm Zazen & Fusatsu</i>	18	19 <i>Passover</i>	20	21	22 <i>Good Friday</i>	23 <i>8:30 am Intro Workshop</i>
24 <i>Easter</i> <i>6:15 Tea 7 pm Zazen</i>	25	26	27	28	29	30