



Great Plains Zen Center

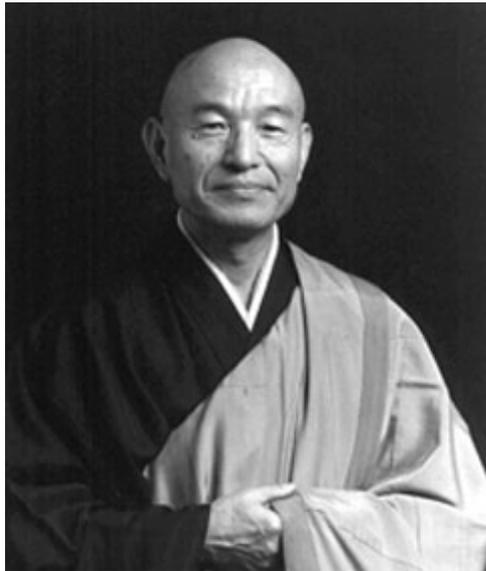


Sangha Newsletter

May through July, 2013

Maezumi Roshi Memorial Beginner's Mind Sesshin – May 17-19

All are encouraged to attend our May Beginner's Mind Sesshin honoring the memory of our founding teacher, Taizan Maezumi Roshi. This retreat offers additional explanation and instruction in 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. The sesshin features a slightly less rigorous schedule than other sesshin, making it ideal for those newer to sesshin practice. However, experienced practitioners are also more than welcome to attend. **On Saturday, May 18 at 10:15 AM, we will have a special memorial service for Maezumi Roshi** followed by a short talk. 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.



Honoring our Founder, Koun Taizan Maezumi Roshi

Maezumi Roshi (February 24, 1931 – May 15, 1995) is recognized as one of the seminal Japanese Soto Zen teachers in this country, founding the Zen Center of Los Angeles in 1967 and producing 12 Dharma heirs. These teachers in turn transmitted the Dharma to many more students. The nearly 100 descendants in the Dharma of Maezumi Roshi are collectively known as the White Plum Asanga. Maezumi Roshi received **Shiho (Full Dharma Transmission)** from **Baian Hakuju Kuroda, Roshi**, in the **Soto Zen** lineage, which he later transmitted to his Dharma successors. He also received **Inka (Seal of Approval)** in the Shakyamuni Kai through **Osaka Koryu Roshi** and received **Inka** in the **Sanbo**

Kyodan through **Hakuun Yasutani Roshi**. In his teaching, **Maezumi Roshi** incorporated the approaches of all of his teachers, drawing from an exceptionally rich background and expressing the teaching of the Buddha in a very broad and colorful way. **Myoyu Roshi**, teacher of the Great Plains Zen Center, received Dharma Transmission from Maezumi Roshi in 1995, authorizing her to teach.

For Zen students the most important thing is not to be dualistic. Our “original mind” includes everything within itself. It is always rich and sufficient within itself. You should not lose your self-sufficient state of mind. This does not mean a closed mind, but actually an empty mind and a ready mind. If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few...

...In the beginner's mind, there is not thought, “I have attained something.” All self-centered thoughts limit our vast mind. When we have no thought of achievement, no thought of self, we are true beginners. Then we can really learn something. The beginner's mind is the mind of compassion. When our mind is compassionate, it is boundless. Dogen-zenji, the founder of our school, always emphasized how important it is to resume our boundless original mind. Then we are always true to ourselves, in sympathy with all beings, and can actually practice.

– Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

7-Day Sesshin – June 16-22

Please join us for the extraordinary opportunity to participate in a 7-day sesshin. Sitting together for a week allows us to go deeply into practice and revitalize our vows to accomplish the way. Although any amount of sitting is precious, having 7 days of practice is truly remarkable. The amount of time may seem intimidating, but body and mind tend to adjust after a few days allowing much more subtle, deep practice. It is also perfectly OK to come for just a few days if that is all that your schedule will allow.

Sesshin will begin on Sunday night, June 16 and end late morning on Saturday, June 22. 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 \$350 for members and \$420 for non-members and includes overnight lodging as well as all meals. The cost is prorated for part time participation. Feel free to contact Myoyu Roshi at 608-325-6248 if you need a full or partial scholarship to attend this sesshin.

Hike, Potluck, Gate of Sweet Nectar and Bonfire following close of sesshin – June 22

Whether or not you plan to attend sesshin, please join us for a short hike on Saturday afternoon (June 22) followed by a potluck dinner. This will be a great opportunity for us to spend social time together enjoying the beginning of summer. Children, spouses, family and friends are welcome to join for the hike and/or potluck. There will be special activities for children of all ages. More specific information will follow, but plan on the hike taking place within an hour's drive of Myoshinji and starting around 1 PM.

At about 8 PM, as it begins to grow dark, we will have the **Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony** followed by a bonfire. This beautiful, moving ceremony includes chanting in Pali, Sanskrit, Japanese and English. Candles line the driveway and porch, beckoning all beings to come and receive the nourishment of the Dharma. We pray for all of our departed ancestors, friends and pets. We also affirm our own vow to practice loving actions toward all beings and to nourish thirsting spirits and hungry ghosts wherever and however they appear, other or self. All are welcome to attend the Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony.

Whether or not you are able to attend, you can still request the names of any deceased relatives, friends or pets be added to the Book of the Dead. The practice of remembering our ancestors is important in many traditions. It is strongly emphasized in Buddhism, perhaps in part a legacy of the Confucianist influence on Chinese Buddhism. In any case, we encourage you to participate in the ceremony.

Following the Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony, we will have a bonfire. Please bring a musical instrument if you like. We may even revive the ancient tradition of Dharma Jeopardy (a few may remember from our family weekend some years back). Everyone is encouraged to spend the night, so that you can all drive back safely on Sunday.

Note that there are many options for participating in these Sangha events. Practitioners may choose to attend all or part of the seven-day sesshin and stay for some or all of the events following. Some may wish to arrive on Friday evening or even Saturday morning for the 9 AM sitting. You may also arrive in time for the hike, the potluck or the evening events. Please be sure to RSVP to Lorrie Chikuin Kountz, our Guestmaster, at 773-849-3504 or e-mail her at lorriekountz@gmail.com to let us know your plans. Overnight accommodations are available at Myoshinji or even at nearby motels if preferred.

Three-Day Sesshin – July 25-28

Our July retreat, held at Myoshinji will begin on Thursday evening (7/25) and run through Sunday Morning (7/28). Please refer to registration instructions below for this and all retreats.

Registration for GPZC Events

To register, for GPZC events, please register/pay online at 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.

Embracing Forgiveness, an Innovative Workshop

*** Saturday, July 13 in Palatine, IL**

*** Saturday, August 10, in Monroe, WI**

This one-day workshop combines the pioneering of work of Dr. Robert Enright of the International Forgiveness Institute on forgiveness and the experience of meditation to help us open to our feelings and move forward with them. Participants will use journaling and guided meditation to explore various topics, including:

What is forgiveness? Does forgiving mean forgetting? Is forgiveness a sign of weakness? Is reconciliation a necessary part of forgiveness? How do I forgive myself? What ways of working with anger are more successful than others?

Participants will be given tools in the form of understanding and experience to help on their personal journey. Participants can share as much or as little as they want in an atmosphere of respectful and nonjudgmental listening. The workshop runs from 9 - 3 and includes a vegetarian lunch. This workshop is led by Susan Myoyu Andersen, Zen teacher of the Great Plains Zen Center. Participants of any faith are welcome to attend. Both locations are wheelchair accessible. The suggested donation is \$35, \$20 for students, seniors or others requesting a reduced rate.

In the beginning I was skeptical that there would not be enough time to explore the depth of my anger, confusion, and sense of betrayal from my past. With the guidance and meditation experience from the Roshi, as well as handouts and voluntary sharing of the participants, I felt very close to everyone as I honestly shared my feelings.

I'd highly recommend this workshop to anyone who is searching for a path and forum to express their feelings in a confidential, non-judgmental listening meditative session.

–Workshop Participant

July 13 Workshop: Countryside UU Church, 1025 N. Smith Rd., Palatine, IL 60078

August 10 Workshop: Great Plains Zen Center, W7762 Falk Rd., Monroe, WI 53566.

For further information, please contact gpzc@greatplainszen.org or call 608-325-6248. Online registration is available at www.greatplainszen.org.

GPZC Begins a Monthly Practice of Council.

Council will take place from 6:00 – 6:45 PM on one Sunday each month at Countryside Church. The first two sessions will take place on **June 2** and **July 7**. Further dates will be announced in the August-October newsletter. **Council** is an ancient practice of deep listening with references as far back as Homer's *Iliad*. The practice in this continent can be traced to the League of the Iroquois and native peoples of the Plains and Southwestern Pueblos and continues to be an important part of Native American culture. It is said to have been used in the early days of our federal government. Today, many organizations, including Zen Centers, incorporate the process of council into their meeting structure and communications trainings.

This non-hierarchical practice embraces the intentions of Listening from the Heart, Speaking from the Heart, Being of "Lean Expression," and Spontaneity. Council creates a safe space with these intentions and with confidentiality maintained, allowing participants to connect at a deeper level and to bring forth the unexpected and transformative. No preparation is necessary to attend monthly councils. The guidelines for council will be reviewed by the facilitator at the start of each council session. We are looking forward to this opportunity to bring more connection, authenticity and support to our Sangha relationships

Buddha's Birthday Celebration a Success

Many thanks to Lorrie Chikuin Kountz for the wonderful guitar work at Buddha's Birthday. The children ranged from 11 months to 3 years and had special fun with balloons, the recycling song and the big drum – not to mention exploring the church. Thanks to Peter and Lorrie for bringing refreshments and Laura for help with set up. The flower house was beautiful and yes, once again Eli managed to fit entirely inside it!

Comings and Goings

Roshi travelled to Cedar Rapids Zen Center on April 21st to give a talk and attend the annual board meeting. She has served on the CRZC board for the last 4 years. CRZC's resident teacher, Rev. Zuiko Redding, Roshi has agreed to visit and speak at Myoshinji in the near future.

Myoyu Roshi and Gendo Sensei will travel to Denver, Colorado to attend the White Plum annual meeting May 2-5. The White Plum Asanga is an organization of dharma descendants of Maezumi Roshi and has nearly 100 eligible members at this time leading sanghas all over the world. The initial part of the meeting will feature speaker Marie Fortune of the Faith Trust Institute addressing issues surrounding Responding to Misconduct and Healthy Boundaries for religious communities and their leaders.

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 for *Council* discussion at 6:00. See the calendar for specific dates for these activities.

Expanded Schedule at Myoshinji

We are pleased to offer an expanded schedule at Myoshinji. We now have early morning sitting at 5:30 on Thursdays and Fridays with a morning service following. Evening zazen takes place Wednesdays, Thursdays and 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.

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, May 25, June 29 and July 20 and run from 8:30-11:30 AM, followed by an informal lunch.
- Workshops at **Myoshinji** (Wisconsin) will be held June 8 and July 13 (none in May). 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

By e-mail: gpzc@greatplainszen.org

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

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

Upcoming Dates for 2013:

- May 17-19 Beginners Mind II Sesshin
- June 16-23 Seven Day Sesshin
- July 25-28 Three Day Sesshin (Th-Sun)
- August 16-18 Zazenkai (Fri-Sun)
- September 13-15 Beginners Mind Sesshin
- October 4-7 Bodhidharma Sesshin (Fri-Mon)
- November 15-17 Zazenkai (Fri-Sun)
- December 5-8 Rohatsu (Th-Sun)

GPZC

P.O. Box 2077

Palatine, IL 60078-2077

(Note our new mailing address!)

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

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

May 2013

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

June 2013

						1 8:30am Service 9am Zazen
2	3	4	5 7:00p Zazen	6 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	7 5:30a Zazen & Service	8 8:30 am Intro Workshop
9	10	11	12 7:00p Zazen	13 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	14 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	15 8:30am Service 9am Zazen
16 Sesshin	17 Sesshin	18 Sesshin	19 Sesshin 7:00p Zazen	20 Sesshin 7:00p Zazen	21 Sesshin 7:00p Zazen	22 Sesshin 9am Zazen *Special Events
23	24	25	26 7:00p Zazen	27 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	28 5:30a Zazen & Service 7:00p Zazen	29 8:30am Service 9am Zazen
30						

* Special Events on June 22: Hiking; Potluck Dinner; Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony; Bonfire. See article, page 2.

July 2013

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

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

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

May 2013

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

June 2013

2 6 pm Council 7 pm Zazen	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 7 pm Zazen & Teisho	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 <i>Sesshin</i> 7:00p Zazen	17 <i>Sesshin</i>	18 <i>Sesshin</i>	19 <i>Sesshin</i>	20 <i>Sesshin</i>	21 <i>Sesshin</i>	22 <i>Sesshin</i>
23 <i>Sesshin</i> 7 pm Zazen	24	25	26	27	28	29 8:30 am Intro Workshop
30 7 pm Zazen & Fusatsu						

July 2013

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 6 pm Council 7 pm Zazen & Teisho	8	9	10	11	12	13 9:00 am Forgiveness Workshop
14 7 pm Zazen	15	16	17	18	19	20 8:30 am Intro Workshop
21 7 pm Zazen & Fusatsu	22	23	24	25 <i>Sesshin</i>	26 <i>Sesshin</i>	27 <i>Sesshin</i>
28 7 pm Zazen	29	30	31			