



# Great Tree Zen Temple

newsletter / fall-winter / 2013 -14

## Zen Pilgrimage

– Reverend Teijo Munnich

It started as a road trip to visit my teacher Katagiri Roshi's stupa (burial site) at Hokyoji, in southeastern Minnesota. Hokyoji is the land that was purchased by the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center in 1978 as a place for residential practice. When it was bought, it was just a piece of land. Over the years it has developed into a small practice community.

There were four of us traveling together, soon to be called "pilgrims" because by the time we got on the road, the trip had expanded beyond a visit to Roshi's stupa to an expedition that included stops at seven Zen centers and a Catholic monastery.

The trip was divided into six-hour driving segments to make it relaxing and provide space in the schedule to explore. The distance to Minnesota from Great Tree is about 1,000 miles, and I have traveled this route many times by car, so I had a good sense of how to break it up. The first stop was Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky.

### The Abbey of Gethsemani

Gethsemani is not a Zen center but a Catholic monastery near Bardstown, Kentucky, founded by French Trappist monks in 1848. I became familiar with it through reading the works of Thomas Merton, and I have visited Gethsemani several times over the years when driving to and from Minnesota. Because Thomas Merton was interested in Buddhism, and Zen in particular, many of the monks there have cultivated an interest in Zen. I feel very comfortable there because of my Catholic/Buddhist approach to spirituality.



I was looking forward to the silence, which is almost palpable at Gethsemani. Conversation is allowed only in designated areas of the monastery. When we arrived around 4 pm, everything was very quiet, including the front desk. There were a few young boys whispering in the waiting room. One of them told us he thought the brother who was taking care of the desk was in the kitchen, so we went back there to find him having his afternoon snack. He immediately jumped up and walked us to the front desk, pointing

out along that way that we could come back and help ourselves to drinks, fruit and bread if we wished. He checked us in and sent us to our rooms. We had just enough time to get moved in and settled before Vespers recitation at 5:30.

After Vespers, I found a Trappist Brother at my door. He was Brother Paul Quenon, and he invited us to have supper with him. Brother Paul has been a resident at Gethsemani for 55 years and was mentored by Thomas Merton, known at Gethsemani as Father Louis. He had just finished a weeklong retreat at the hermitage built by Merton, which is about a 20-minute walk from Gethsemani proper. He was very friendly and eager to talk with us. His first question, "How often do you shave your head?"

After supper Brother Paul took us to the hermitage, where we sat on the porch and shared haiku he had written during his retreat—haiku that brought us right into the present moment with their descriptions of the nature all around us. In the distance, we saw a family of deer watching us.

### Sanshinji – Three Minds Temple

When you drive to Minnesota from North Carolina, you drive through Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Sanshinji is located about halfway between Asheville and Minneapolis, in Bloomington, Indiana.

Started by Rev. Shohaku Okumura, Sanshinji currently has one building on about three-quarters of an acre. It houses the Okumura family and a large meditation hall in the basement, as well as a small office. Shohaku is a Japanese monk, a disciple of Uchiyama Kosho Roshi. The emphasis in his lineage



*losing my way  
is part of the journey...*

*poppy flower*

–Inahata Teiko



## GREAT TREE

Our mission is to create a community, based on teachings of Dogen Zenji in the Soto Zen tradition, which serves all whose journey brings them to Great Tree, and to support a residential practice for women.

We are wholly supported by gifts from our friends, membership, volunteers and sangha.



### Abbess

Rev Teijo Munnich

### Great Tree Zen Temple

679 Lower Flat Creek Rd  
Alexander, NC 28701

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www.greentreetemple.org  
828-645-2085

Great Tree is a 501(c)3 religious organization, registered with the State of North Carolina



is on zazen, with rituals and lectures on the back burner. Forms are not emphasized. For a Japanese teacher, it is a very nontraditional approach. Still, Shohaku was formerly the director of the American headquarters of Soto Zen—the Soto Zen International Center in San Francisco—so he has incorporated some formalities into the practice at Sanshinji. We had dinner with Shohaku and his wife, Yuko, watched a family of deer who seemed to be very comfortable living in the yard (and who watched us in return), then headed for Ryumonji in Decorah, Iowa.



### Ryumonji – Dragon Gate Temple

Ryumonji is a monastery built in the architectural style of a traditional Japanese monastery on 40 acres of Iowa farmland. Rev. Shoken Winecoff, also a disciple of Katagiri Roshi, raised money and oversaw the building of this unusual heart-land sight. Eastern Iowa is very beautiful, and this small monastery fits right in with the natural



beauty despite its oriental look. Though much smaller in size, Ryumonji has all the elements of a place of Zen training as prescribed by Dogen Zenji, based on his experience in China.

At Ryumonji I felt tingles of being in a 13th-century-style Japanese monastery, but I also felt I was being propelled into the future. We were very happy to be there. The monastery has a calm and settled feeling, as though it's been there for years, yet the meditation hall and dormitory were dedicated only this past summer. The last time I visited in 2004, there was only a large ceremony hall and an old Iowa farmhouse, which housed Shoken and the meditation hall. So this was a very nice surprise.

We joined the schedule, and it had a comfortable familiarity for us. Based on traditional Zen style, the rhythm and forms were similar enough that we navigated in quite easily. At supper the night before, Shoken had told us the early-morning schedule. At tea after breakfast, we were filled in about what we were doing until lunch. It was a relaxing and comfortable visit, and we settled in very quickly. After lunch we headed to Hokyoji.

### Hokyoji – Catching the Moon Temple

I think perhaps my fellow pilgrims were not prepared for the still-somewhat-primitive lifestyle at Hokyoji. Purchased in 1977 by Minnesota Zen Meditation Center (MZMC) in Minneapolis, the mortgage did not get paid off until the late 1980s.



It was challenging to both take care of the needs of the run-down building in Minneapolis where MZMC was housed and to pay the mortgage on the land which now houses Hokyoji. Structures were originally built from green wood harvested on the property. Hokyoji remained part of MZMC until about four or five years ago, when the two were separated on paper. But the problem of keeping up two centers with not much money lingered until that time, so development has been slow.

We arrived at Hokyoji in mid-afternoon and were met by Rev. Dokai Georgeson, who was busy with the weed eater trying to get things ready for a retreat beginning in a few days. We joined the schedule, but also took some time to walk up to Katagiri Roshi's stupa. It's a bit of a walk up the hill to get there, but one can see a lovely view of the valley, so we spent some time up there, weeding the stupa and enjoying the beauty. After lunch we headed for Dharma Field in Minneapolis.

### Dharma Field

Dharma Field is a Zen community in South Minneapolis started by Rev. Steve Hagen. It is housed in an old church, with the sanctuary turned into a very simple meditation hall. A large rock sits



in front in lieu of a Buddha statue. It has a nice friendly atmosphere, but also a quiet, focused feeling. Steve lives in the pastor's house on one side of the church. On the other side is a house with extra sleeping space for visitors. This is where we stayed for the next five days as we explored centers located in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

We arrived at Dharma Field on Thursday evening and settled in. The next morning we joined zazen, then met with Steve, Rev. Norm Randolph, also a resident teacher, and Rev. Bev Forsman, a disciple of Steve who is in the process of taking on the leadership of Dharma Field. Steve had to leave town right after breakfast, but we had some time over the next few days to meet with Norm and Bev. Norm was a long-time student of Katagiri Roshi's who followed him to Minnesota from San Francisco in the 1970s. He also resides in the dorm where we were staying, so we had many enjoyable moments with him. Bev has been studying with Steve for about 20 years. We were grateful to be able to stay in such a lovely environment.

### Compassionate Ocean Zen Center

On Saturday morning, I gave a lecture at Dharma Field that was attended by many old friends from Minnesota Zen Center, including Rev. Joen Snyder and lay teacher Michael O'Neal, long-time students of Katagiri Roshi, as well as teachers and founders of Compassionate Ocean in northeast Minneapolis. After the lecture at Dharma Field and a short social gathering, we jumped in two cars and drove to visit Compassionate Ocean.



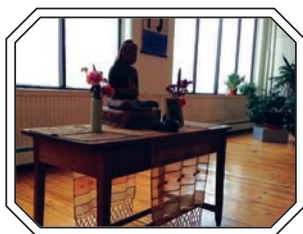
First we visited its current, though temporary, gathering place, located across the street from a not-quite-finished Zen center. Michael is, among other things, an excellent carpenter and has overseen the building of a very-well-thought-out zendo. As with most Zen centers, money has been an issue, so construction has been a stop-and-go process. Nevertheless

they have built a little community by renting a space in the artists' cooperative across the street. Both are lovely spaces and have a warm feeling. We had a nice lunch and tour of the new zendo. The name Compassionate Ocean comes from part of Katagiri Roshi's ordination name: Compassionate Ocean Great Patience.

## Clouds in Water Zen Center

Founded by Rev. Dosho Mike Port, Clouds in Water, located in downtown St. Paul, is now led by Rev. Judith Byakuren Ragir. Dosho was also a disciple of Katagiri Roshi, and Byakuren is his disciple.

On Sunday morning, we joined the program, which included zazen, lecture, and social time. Clouds has a contemporary feel about it. Though they follow forms, it doesn't have a formal feeling. The young man who was lecturing used very 21st-century technology and modern-day examples. At one point, I smiled as he pulled out his iPad and scrolled through it to find a quote he wanted to share. We stayed afterward and talked with people from Clouds, including Ken Ford, another student of Katagiri Roshi, who is a senior lay teacher at Clouds.



Monday morning, we went back to Clouds to meet with Byakuren. Parking in downtown St. Paul is a little confusing, and we had some trouble figuring out how to tell the meter which parking spot we were in. Or maybe we didn't know which parking spot we were in! We put about \$3 in the meter, but when we went back to get something from the car five minutes later, we already had a parking ticket. This was a perfect segue into to some of our conversation with Byakuren about why they are feeling the need to move. Clouds has been in this space for a while, so they are pretty settled, but the downtown area around them has become so developed that they are experiencing a lot of noise and parking problems. It's a lovely place though, and we enjoyed our visit.



### Ryumonji Monastery Bell

May the sound of this bell  
Dispel the three poisons  
and eight hardships  
of all beings.



## Minnesota Zen Meditation Center/Ganshoji – Cultivating the Clouds Temple

Our final visit was to Minnesota Zen Meditation Center. The name Ganshoji was given to MZMC by Katagiri Roshi. It is taken from a poem by Dogen called "Yearning for the Ancient Ways," and is the other half of the line that includes the name of Hokyoji, "Catching the Moon."

### Yearning for the Ancient Ways

The Way of the Ancestors coming from the West  
I transmit to the East.

Yearning for the ancient ways,  
Catching the moon, cultivating the clouds,  
Untouched by worldly dust fluttering about a  
Thatched hut, snowy evening, deep mountain.

– Zen Master Eihei Dogen (13th C)

First we met with Rev. Tim Burkett. When Tim studied at Stanford, he was a student of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, and he knew Katagiri Roshi from that era. After Tim and his wife moved to Minnesota, he started practicing at MZMC and was, along with Norm, the first to be ordained by Katagiri Roshi. Norm told us that Tim had invited Suzuki Roshi to teach a small Zen group at Stanford, and those lectures were the source of the book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. We had a nice visit with Tim and visited MZMC the next evening for a program, which again included zazen and lecture.



### In the Footsteps of Basho – Haiku by 4 Zen Pilgrims, 2013

Brother Paul  
Writes haiku every day  
What is happening in the present?  
The question he asks himself  
He walks barefoot to feel the contours of the earth  
Sleeps outside  
Meditates on the retaining wall at sunrise

Drive three point five miles  
Turn left, turn left, turn left now  
Recalculating...

Great Tree reaching to  
Ten-direction dharma world  
Nurturing beings

Road trip to temples  
Driving by changing landscape  
Reality wakes

Hokyoji Morning  
Grey mist blankets field  
Dawn sees warming sun emerge  
Bees seek sweet nectar

Feeling the Silence  
Awakening within me  
Calling me inward



Rain falls, earth greening  
Rose petals covered with dew  
Dharma fields nourished

Yellow sun rises  
Corn gently sways in the wind  
Zen temples appear

Relishing silence  
Yet feeling the squirminess  
My breath calls to me

Kentucky Bluegrass  
Growing at Gethsemani  
Ha Chimyo! bless you

### Gethsemani Wall



4 Registration for all events is held from 4 pm to 5 pm unless otherwise noted. Orientation begins at 5 pm; dinner is at 6 pm.

# Schedule of Events

## NOVEMBER 2013

**NOV. 1-6: Beginner's Mind Sesshin**

*FEE: \$260/Non-members: \$300*

## DECEMBER 2013

**NOV. 29 – DEC 4: Rohatsu Sesshin**

*FEE: Members: \$260/Non-members: \$300*

**DEC. 7: Annual Buddha's Enlightenment Celebration & Craft Sale**

*LOCATION: Urban Dharma in Downtown Asheville—29 Page Ave.*

**DEC. 14: End Fall Practice Period**

**DEC. 28-31: New Year's Sesshin**

*FEE: \$225*

**DEC. 31: New Year's Eve Activities**

*7 pm-midnight: Ringing in the New Year, led by Rev. Teijo Munnich*

Come join us New Year's Eve for sitting and walking meditation, chanting, and ringing 108 bells to clear ourselves of delusions. Stay afterwards for a little celebrating if you like. Bring your musical instrument and snack food to share. If you plan to attend, RSVP to registrar@greattreetemple.org or by phone 828-645-2085.

## JANUARY 2014

**JAN. 3-5: Present Moment Wonderful Moment**

*A weekend retreat in the Plum Village tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh.*

Join **Judith Toy** and members of the Cloud Cottage Sangha for seated meditation, indoor and outdoor walking meditation, the practice of the bowl for eating meditation, Dharma talk and discussion, singing and chanting.

*FEE: \$175*

**JAN. 10-14: Sewing Retreat for Jukai**

An important part of lay practice in the Soto Zen tradition, Jukai (Receiving the Precepts) is offered every two years at Great Tree to those who choose to take this step on the path. The Sewing Retreat is the beginning of this process. In January precept recipients begin sewing a rakusu (small Buddha robe) for the ceremony of receiving the precepts on April 6. If you are interested, please contact us for more information.

*FEE: \$300*

## FEBRUARY 2014

**FEB. 1-2: Mother and Child Retreat**

*Begins Saturday at 9 am; ends Sunday at noon.*

This retreat is an opportunity for mothers to strengthen their spiritual practice in a sharing environment with their children. Activities are designed to help children naturally learn from the example of their mother and others. There will be opportunities for mothers and children to share separately from each other. All ages are welcome. Please notify Great Tree in advance if you wish to arrive Friday evening.

*FEE: \$150 for mother and one child; \$25 for each additional child.*

**FEB. 7-9: Sesshin**

## MARCH 2014

**MAR. 7-9: Sesshin**

**MAR. 22: Introduction to Zen**

*9 am - 12 noon*

This class will offer instruction in zazen (sitting meditation) from the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition. This simple practice of sitting quietly is sometimes described as "just sitting." The morning will include instruction in basic form, zazen and kinhin (walking meditation), and opportunity for questions and discussion.

*FEE: Dana*

**MAR. 25 – MAY 18: Spring Practice Period**

Practice Period is a time for formally making a deeper commitment to your spiritual practice. If you would like to join in or have questions about it, please contact us at info@greattreetemple.org. Requirements are coming to the opening and closing teas, being present at Great Tree at regular times, and meeting with Rev. Teijo Munnich regularly to talk about your practice. *Dana*

## APRIL 2014

**APR. 4-6: Sesshin**

**APR. 11-13: Mindfulness and Ikebana**

**Led by Norma Bradley & Anna Matheson**

Bathed in the beauty of the spring season, wrapped in a blanket of silence, we will enjoy sitting and walking meditation and mindful movement. Norma will teach the principles of ikebana (Japanese flower arranging), and participants will have an opportunity to create ikebana arrangements, draw, write and share their experiences. Anna will guide participants in mindfulness as taught by Thich Nhat Hanh. We will also share delicious vegan meals and friendship.

*FEE: \$175*

## MAY 2014

**MAY 2-7: Sesshin**

**MAY 9-11: Your Inner Life Story—A Writing Retreat**

**Led by Carolyn Wallace**

This workshop will take participants deeply into reflection on their life as a spiritual journey, in both the past and present, as they write the story of their inner life journey. They will also explore ways to use writing as a meditative practice for spiritual reflection and opening to awareness of one's true nature.

*FEE: \$175*

**MAY 23-26: SDRC Beginner's Mind Retreat**

*LOCATION: Southern Dharma Retreat Center, Hot Springs, NC*

For details and to register, go to [www.southerndharma.org](http://www.southerndharma.org)

## JUNE 2014

**JUNE 4-25: Practicing Throughout the Day: A Three-Week Zen Intensive**

The first week of this practice period will include orientation and sesshin; the schedule for the last two weeks will be based on Juniji Hogo, a teaching about what to do during two-hour segments of the day. It was written by 14th century Zen Master Daichi Sokei Zenji as an instruction for lay students who came to the monastery to practice with the monks. The emphasis is on daily practice, including meditation, study and work. Juniji means 12 hours. Hogo means dharma words. COLLEGE CREDIT AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS.

*Registration opens: January 15.*

*FEE: \$900: \$50 non-refundable application fee due by May 1. Payment plan available with early registration. Additional charges for college credits (arranged through Mars Hill College; can be transferred to any college). Visit our website for more information.*

**JUNE 6-11: Sesshin**

## JULY 2014

### JULY 4-6: Sesshin

Led by Rev. Chimyo Atkinson

### JULY 11-13: Teen Retreat

*Begins Friday at 5 pm; ends Sunday at 4 pm*

This retreat for ages 14 and up includes Dharma teachings and Buddhism study and discussion, meditation, and instruction in temple practices.

**FEE: \$70 per child; \$120 for two children; more than two, please inquire.**

### JULY 21-23: Children's Retreat

*Begins Monday at 5 pm; ends Wednesday at 4 pm*

Children 7 years and older are invited to participate in a modified retreat schedule under the guidance of Great Tree Sangha adults. Includes Dharma teaching and discussion on some aspect of Buddhism as well as meditation, chanting, and work activity. May also include crafts such as clay play and origami, outdoor fun, quiet time to practice silence, and music. A kid-friendly practice time.

**FEE: \$70 per child; \$120 for two children; more than two, please inquire.**

## AUGUST 2014

### AUG. 1-3: Zen Writing Retreat

Led by Peggy Millin

*Begins Friday at 5 pm; ends Sunday at noon*

Free your creative spirit in a weekend of creative writing within a safe and supportive circle of women. "To control your cow, give it a wide pasture," said Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki, and now you can explore its meaning in this Zen writing workshop for women. Take down the fences around your definition of "writing" and explore what it means to you. We will write and read in circle in the morning. You will have afternoon time to explore writing on your own. You need not be a writer and no meditation experience is required. Come with an open mind and empty notebook and leave with an open heart and a notebook of inspiration.

**FEE: \$225.**

### AUG. 30: Practice Day—Mindful Morning and Active Afternoon

*Space is limited to 14, so please RSVP no later than Monday, August 26.*

9 am to 12 noon: Meditation, dharma talk/discussion

12:30 - 2 pm: Lunch

2 - 4 pm: Work practice, yoga. We will end the day with tea together at 4 pm

**FEE: Dana**

### AUG. 31: Great Tree Eighth Anniversary Celebration

Great Tree sangha members will prepare an anniversary brunch to celebrate Great Tree's eighth anniversary! Happy Birthday, Great Tree! Please RSVP to registrar@greattreetemple.org or by phone to 828-645-2085. Carpool if possible or ask about off-site parking-shuttle option. Dana welcome.

## OCTOBER 2014

### OCT. 8 – DEC. 14: Fall Practice Period

Practice Period is a time for formally making a deeper commitment to your spiritual practice. If you would like to join in or have questions about it, please contact us at info@greattreetemple.org. Requirements are coming to the opening and closing teas, being present at Great Tree at regular times, and meeting with Rev. Teijo Munnich regularly to talk about your practice. —**Dana**

## Call for Recipes for a Great Tree Cookbook

We are gathering recipes and stories to go with them. Do you have a favorite recipe, and maybe a story that accompanies it? We would love to hear from you. Watch for our cookbook gatherings, and come join us. Or, if you can't make the trek, simply email your recipes to us.

## OCTOBER 2014 *continued...*

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### OCT. 2-5: Anattasati Magga retreat: Let the World take care of Itself

Led by Sujata Nancy Spence

This retreat offers the rare opportunity to "let the world take care of itself" while you absorb the silence and stillness of retreat. The schedule includes services; seated, walking, and work meditation; and Dharma classes and study periods. Except for Dharma lectures, the retreat will be in silence. There will be no specific Dharma topic.

Instead, we will aim to become easy and familiar with how we conduct our retreat and how we move through the monastic schedule, letting the self settle and feel deeply supported by each day of practice.

**FEE: \$225**

### OCT. 10-13: Beginner's Mind Sesshin

For both experienced and beginning practitioners. Teaching and meditation practice from the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition by Rev. Teijo Munnich. Instruction and gentle hands-on work with meditation posture to develop body awareness and ease will be offered by Meredith McIntosh using Alexander Technique.

**FEE: \$225**

## NOVEMBER 2014

### NOV. 7-12: Sesshin

## DECEMBER 2014

### DEC. 5-10: Rohatsu Sesshin

### DEC. 13: Crafts Sale

### DEC. 28-31: New Year's Sesshin

### DEC. 31: Ringing in the new year

2 pm - 5 pm: End of the Year Temple Cleaning

7 pm - midnight: Ringing in the New Year

Led by: Rev. Teijo Munnich

Come join us New Year's Eve for sitting and walking meditation, chanting, and ringing 108 bells to clear ourselves of delusions. Stay afterwards for a little celebrating if you like. Bring your musical instrument and snack food to share. Dana welcome. If you plan to attend, please let us know by email to registrar@greattreetemple.org or by phone at 828-645-2085 so we can send you a more detailed schedule. You can also RSVP at <http://bookwhen.com/gtzen>. —**Dana**

## JUKAI—RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS

On April 6, 2014, Great Tree will offer Jukai, the ceremony to receive the Buddhist precepts. Each participant is asked to sew a rakusu, a small version of the Buddha's robe. Sewn in the pattern of a rice field, it symbolizes all beings living in peace and harmony. If you are interested in receiving the precepts at this ceremony, you are required to participate in the following:

1. January 10-14: Sewing Retreat to begin sewing rakusus. All participants are responsible for completing their rakusus themselves. Extra assistance will be offered if needed.
2. April 4-6: Weekend Sesshin
3. April 6: Jukai Ceremony, 3 pm

*If you are interested in receiving the precepts, please contact Rev. Teijo Munnich ([teijo@greattreetemple.org](mailto:teijo@greattreetemple.org)) and submit one written page describing your practice and intent to participate in Jukai.*

## ONGOING PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

**Practice Periods 2014:** March 25 - May 18 / Sept 28 - Dec 14

Practice Period is a time for formally making a deeper commitment to your spiritual practice. If you would like to join in or have questions about it, please contact us at [info@greattreetemple.org](mailto:info@greattreetemple.org). Requirements are coming to the opening and closing teas, being present at Great Tree at regular times, and meeting with Rev. Teijo Munnich regularly to talk about your practice. **Fee: Dana**

**Tuesday Meditation & Study Group: 3:30 - 5:30 pm** (Every Tuesday)

This informal, ongoing discussion group centers around a specific text. It is fine to come just for zazen if you wish. However, please let us know by phone (828-645-2085) or email if you plan to attend: [info@greattreetemple.org](mailto:info@greattreetemple.org). You can also receive weekly reminders and schedule updates along with the suggested reading.

**Fee: Dana**

Fall 2013: September 17 – December 17

Spring 2014: February 11 – May 20 / Fall 2014: September 23 – December 2

**Thursday Morning Sangha: 6 - 11 am** (Every Thurs in 2014 except Jan 2)

Meditation, chanting, breakfast, communal work. Come for any part and stay for as much as you wish. Please let us know if you're coming.

**Sangha Work Days: . 9:30 am - 4pm** (Third Saturday of each month)

2013: Nov 16, Dec none. 2014: Jan 18, Feb 15, March 15, April 19, May 17, June 14, July 19, Aug 16, Sept 20, Oct 18, Nov 15, Dec none

**Sunday Sangha: 10:30-Noon** (Third Sunday of the month)

Sangha is community. Restorative Yoga from 9 - 10 am, followed by meditation, talk & discussion. May come for all or part. Everyone welcome!

2013: Nov 17, Dec 15. 2014: Jan 19, Feb 16, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, Aug 17, Sept 21, Oct 19, Nov 16, Dec none

**Family Meditation: 10:30am** (Last Sunday of each month)

Family meditation is open to all ages and includes a short period of meditation and Dharma teaching. It may also include improvisational play, crafts projects, walking meditation, or community work. Potluck snack for those who can stay. Parents, children, and anyone interested welcome. To be put on the Family Meditation email list, contact Paige Gilchrist: [pmgilchrist@gmail.com](mailto:pmgilchrist@gmail.com)

2013: Nov 24, Dec none. 2014: Jan 26, Feb 23, March 30, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, Aug none, Sept 28, Oct 26, Nov 30, Dec none (come to the Crafts Fair!)

### RETREAT FEES: Member Discounts Discontinued after Dec 31, 2013

We regret to announce that we will discontinue member's discounts after December 31, 2013. Having the two-tier pricing system made the online registration process difficult and confusing. Each event had two fees to be posted online, with different deposit options. And if you were not already a member, it meant filling out a membership form along with the personal info form. We have been looking for an alternative registration option since our signup page crashed the website in 2011.

To streamline the process, we have decided to simplify it and create a single fee option. We are testing a new application that you can check out at <http://bookwhen.com/gtzen>. (There is a link on the [greattreetemple.org](http://greattreetemple.org) registration page.) The site allows you to RSVP, register, or edit your registration. We welcome feedback on the use of this new tool. Please note that you can still register by regular mail with a personal check or money order. We ask that you mail your completed registration no later than 14 days preceding an event.

*If you are financially challenged or need to find out more about how to arrange for practice at Great Tree, please contact [registrar@greattreetemple.org](mailto:registrar@greattreetemple.org) or call 828-645-2085 to talk with us. Please visit our website to learn more about our schedule of programs and special events or to be included as a member of our growing community.*

TO LEARN MORE OR REGISTER ON-LINE, VISIT [WWW.GREATTREETEMPLE.ORG](http://WWW.GREATTREETEMPLE.ORG)  
TIP: PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM FOR REGISTRATIONS INSTEAD OF CUTTING OUT.

## REGISTRATION FOR GREAT TREE EVENTS

**ARRIVAL:** Most events begin with a light meal on the first evening and end at noon on the last day. Please arrive to check in by 4pm; orientation and preparation begins at 5pm. Contact us if you need directions: 828-645-2085 [info@greattreetemple.org](mailto:info@greattreetemple.org)

**PAYMENT:** If you are sending a deposit only, please include your check or money order for 1/2 the event fee (for events over \$100.) Make check payable to Great Tree Zen Temple and mail it to Great Tree Zen Temple, 679 Lower Flat Creek Rd, Alexander NC 28701, attn. Registration. Please indicate the event on the check memo line. This secures your reservation. Registration closes when the event fills or 3 days prior to the event. Forms and payment in full should be mailed 14 days prior. We do not have credit card processing on site.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** If you need to cancel, we request that you do so in a timely fashion, so we can contact people on the waiting list. We must receive your cancellation no later than 7 (seven) days prior to the event. There is a \$25 cancellation fee for events after 7 days. If Great Tree cancels (this is rare), the entire amount will be reimbursed, if you have prepaid in full.

**DATES TO ATTEND:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EVENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Fee or  Deposit enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Diet, Allergies, etc : \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Their Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician / Phone / Insurance etc. if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP:** Sangha members receive email, newsletter, invitations and updates.

Are you a member?  Yes  No  Please update my contact info.

**Great Tree sesshins (Zen retreats) are, as much as possible, *silent*.**

Both men and women are invited to attend and stay at the temple for the duration of a retreat. Sesshins consist of zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), work periods, and oryoki meals. Meals are vegan. Participants are expected to share cooking and cleanup duties. Please let us know the dates you will attend on the registration form. If you are new to Great Tree and cannot attend the entire sesshin, we request that you start with everyone on Friday and attend at least the weekend option (Friday 5 pm - Sunday noon). If you can only attend part of the sesshin, you are still welcome, but please contact us before you register to discuss your schedule.

**After December 31, 2013, discounts for members will be discontinued.**

To ease the registration process, we have activated a new online reservation program, BookWhen: <http://bookwhen.com/gtzen>. Please see the information on Retreat Fees at left. You may also continue to make reservations by mail; use the form here or copy it. Questions? Email: [registrar@greattreetemple.org](mailto:registrar@greattreetemple.org).

Fees for retreats taught by guest teachers may vary. Please check the schedule.

**2014 SESSHIN FEES: 2 NIGHTS: \$175 • 3 NIGHTS: \$225 • 5 NIGHTS: \$300**

*We ask you to bring your own sheets, blankets, pillows, towels, toiletries, and other necessities. We do not wear shoes in the temple, so please bring indoor slippers/socks if you need them. Also, please bring clothes and shoes for work period. If you are a sensitive sleeper, please bring earplugs, as accommodations are shared, dormitory-style.*

## 1st Quarter Financial Report (June-August 2013)

In the first quarter of our financial year, we have seen some positive results through fundraising and have been able to meet our obligations with greater ease. We have built back our contingency fund in a modest way, though the goal is to at least double it to cover unexpected expenses or a dire emergency. This fund is intended as a stable but liquid reserve. Some expected seasonal expenses have been greater, including additional road maintenance for the driveway following weeks of rain in May and June. A generous conditional gift helped offset expenses for lawn mowing and general landscaping, which we outsourced this year so we could keep up with the grass. Inflow has stabilized to a degree, but is still uneven. We are monitoring expenses closely, and the board is working to build inflow. Several projects, including site planning, are on hold, and some maintenance projects, like road improvement, building repairs, and septic issues, are on the to-do list for completion as funds become available.

Great Tree opened in September 2005, and eight years later we are approaching our halfway point on the mortgage. The board of directors hosted a tea ceremony program this spring that was fun and well received, giving Great Tree a greater presence in the Asheville community. The board is working on several projects: a cookbook, crafts, and a cottage industry that we hope will show an impact so that Great Tree can grow beyond month-to-month management. What else might help? Support from volunteers and participation on planned workdays (free lunch is offered!). We also need to fill two seats on the board of directors. Check our wish list online for other ways to support Great Tree. With participation and planning we will not only bring about stability, but also allow for sustainability.

### PROFIT & LOSS

#### Inflow

#### 1st QUARTER 2013

Dana	14,214.00
Gifts-Conditional	1,000.00
Honorarium-Memorials	518.00
Books, crafts: sales	171.00
Practice inflow	2,179.00
Interest earned	24.00
	<hr/>
	18,106.00

#### Outflow

Mortgage	5,724.00
Development, fundraising	1,730.00
Kitchen, facility supplies	1,190.00
Building, grounds	1,041.00
Office, communications	1,827.00
Residents, staff payroll	4,561.00
	<hr/>
	16,073.00

**NET INCOME 2,033.00**

### BALANCE SHEET

#### ASSETS

Checking, Petty Cash	3,048.00
Contingency Fund	4,128.00
Savings (CDS)	69,953.00
	<hr/>
Total on Hand	70,129.00
Facility, tractor, furnishings	336,592.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>406,721.00</b>

#### LIABILITIES

Payroll Taxes	639.00
Mortgage due	185,083.00
	<hr/>
Total liabilities	192,205.00
	<hr/>
Retained Earnings	212,483.00
Net Income	2,033.00
	<hr/>
Total Equity	214,516.00

**TOTAL:  
Liabilities & Equity 406,721.00**

## December's Annual CRAFT SALE And Buddha's Enlightenment Ceremony



**Saturday, Dec 7, 11 am-4 pm**

**Buddha Ceremony, 2 pm**

**At: Urban Dharma, 29 Page Ave.**

Great Tree is getting ready for the annual Buddha's Enlightenment Celebration and Craft Sale. We'll continue crafting show offerings at our meetings on Sangha Sundays up until November 20, but donations will be accepted up to the day of the sale. We are open to all donations, but are focusing on hanging ornaments, functional pottery and altar elements.

If you have a craft item that you or someone else has made, or have a pre-purchased item for the sale, you may drop it off up until the sale day at Great Tree. Someone will be available to pick up your items if you are unable to get here. If you will be bringing a craft donation to the sale that morning, please let us know ahead of time. And if you would like to bake something for the goody table, you may drop it off at Great Tree close to the date, or, bring it along when you come to the celebration. We hope to see you all there for the celebration and early holiday shopping!



## Great Tree's Children's Retreat *—by Anna Yokote*

Every year I look forward to coming to the summer Children's Retreat. At the retreat we get to have fun and learn about ourselves, Buddha and interaction with people. We get time away from all the unnecessary things, like technology, video games and the Internet. Meditating teaches us how to be content with every moment, and helps us keep our minds in the present. We work together as a group, doing chores all together and working on projects such as plays or dances. We learn how it is to be in a community. We do art, games, plays, dances and projects. All of us are comfortable to be ourselves here at Great Tree and really appreciate all the people who make this special time possible. Thanks!



Great Tree Zen Women's Temple  
679 Lower Flat Creek Rd  
Alexander, NC 28701

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### The Cranes Project Update

There is a story called "The Paper Crane" about a dancing crane who brought prosperity to a failing restaurant. The Cranes Project at Great Tree is beginning to bring prosperity to Great Tree Temple. Though we haven't reached our goal of \$100,000 to pay off half the mortgage, with the 133 single gifts or pledges we have received in the past year we have been able to keep up with our monthly mortgage payments and other expenses. The crane is dancing at Great Tree. Again this year we will be happy to send cranes to you or to someone you wish to support. Just ask and we will send as many as you want. Maybe they will dance for you!

When you send Great Tree Zen Temple your gift, if you wish, we will send you a crane with a metta wish. Or you may request that we send the metta crane as a gift from you to your friends or loved ones with a metta wish. We will include a gift card in your name stating that the crane is a gift to them made in their name to Great Tree Zen Temple.

MY (OUR)  GIFT  PLEDGE is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- One-time gift     Check enclosed    Check payable to Great Tree Zen Temple
- Installment gift /pledge to be paid:
  - ...  monthly ...  quarterly ...  annually

Please apply this gift to  **MORTGAGE FUND** or:

General Fund  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is:  in memory of:     in honor of:

*Please include contact info for person to be notified of your gift.*

This gift is anonymous (acknowledged for taxes)

My (Our) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Send crane/metta msg to me     Do not send
- Send crane/metta msg to address I've enclosed

Check "Cranes" on envelope provided for mailing.  
Mail form to Great Tree or use our online form at :  
[www.greattreetemple.org/cranes/](http://www.greattreetemple.org/cranes/)

### The Crane of Prosperity

A man owned a restaurant on a busy road. He loved to cook good food and he loved to serve it. He worked from morning until night, and he was happy.

But a new highway was built close by. Travelers drove straight from one place to another and no longer stopped at the restaurant. The man became poor, and had nothing to do but dust and polish his empty plates and tables.

One evening a stranger came into the restaurant. His clothes were old and worn, but he had an unusual, gentle manner. Even though he did not have money to pay for food, the owner was kind to him and cooked the best meal he could make and served him like a king.

To thank the owner for his kindness, the stranger made him a paper crane out of a napkin and told him, "You have only to clap your hands, and this bird will come to life and dance for you." And the stranger left.

It happened just as the stranger had said. The owner had only to clap his hands and the paper crane flew down to the floor and danced.

Word of the dancing crane spread and people came from far and near to see the magic bird perform. The owner was happy again, for his restaurant was always full of guests.

Weeks and months passed. One evening, a man came into the restaurant. His clothes were old and worn, but he had an unusual, gentle manner. The owner knew him at once and was overjoyed.

The stranger said nothing. He took a flute out and began to play and the crane danced as it had never danced. When the stranger finished playing, he lowered the flute from his lips, and returned it to his pocket.

After the stranger played, he climbed on the crane's back. They flew away, never to be seen again.

The restaurant still stands by the side of the road and guests still come to eat and hear the story of the gentle stranger and the magic crane.

