



Great Tree Zen Temple

newsletter / spring-summer / 2013

Each season flows easily
into the other, and
I do not know who writes
this in a world of change.

—Ryonen Genso

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.

Abdess

Rev Teijo Munnich

Great Tree Zen Temple

679 Lower Flat Creek Rd
Alexander, NC 28701

info@greattreetemple.org
www.greattreetemple.org
828-645-2085

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

How to Make Love Bloom!

— Reverend Teijo Munnich

People often ask me whether there are teachings about love in Buddhism. The answer is yes. There is the practice called *metta* or “lovingkindness,” a practice of friendship, good will, kindness, active interest in others, and compassion. *Metta* is love without clinging.

Metta practice can help people develop a mental habit of altruistic love. By awakening within ourselves feelings of good will toward ourselves, those near to us, and all beings, it is more likely that these feelings will arise rather than other, less desirable feelings. Hatred cannot coexist with loving-kindness; ill-will dissipates and is not replenished if we replace angry thoughts with thoughts rooted in love.

Loving-kindness makes the mind more flexible and counteracts judgments that arise as we become more aware of self-centeredness. It helps to balance the inner focus of meditation practice and offers the opportunity to experience selflessness, joy, adaptability, and expansiveness.

In the practice of *metta* we send love, peace, and gratitude first toward ourselves, our body, and our life, and then to family, friends, and acquaintances, and gradually out into the world to include all creatures and life on earth. We begin by giving loving-kindness to ourselves. This is the foundation for being able to offer genuine love to others.

We recently explored the practice of *metta* at Great Tree during the Mother and Child Retreat. We read and talked about the *Metta Sutra*, made valentines with *metta* wishes for ourselves, were given secret pals to practice *metta* on, and we sent loving-kindness to those we do not know, making *Jizos* (small protector statues) to be given as needed to those who are suffering. We also recited the *Metta Sutra* daily during the retreat. One child had a difficult time making a valentine for himself, saying he didn't want to, didn't see the point. Finally he mumbled under his breath, “I don't like myself.” I was surprised to hear this from a child, but I think that many of us may be reluctant to give ourselves loving-kindness, either because we don't like ourselves, or perhaps because we feel we are being self-centered. But that is not the spirit of this practice.



One has to learn to live with oneself, to be a friend with oneself, to be at peace with oneself, to learn to be happy with oneself, because where you go, you take you with you.

—Ajahn Brahmavamso

When we truly love ourselves, we are naturally able to help others. The Buddha pointed out, “If a person cannot help himself well, he cannot help others well.”

Next we begin to spread this loving-kindness out, sending love to our family and friends, to those we love a great deal, those we like or simply feel neutral toward, even to people we may feel some agitation or anger toward. (If we only select a few good friends and exclude those we don't like, then we don't really understand *metta*.) Then we extend loving-kindness to all beings—those we don't know everywhere, people, animals, and plants, and all beings seen and unseen.

For cultivating *metta* in daily life, reciting the *Metta Sutra* is important. It's like planting a garden, putting healthy seeds in the ground, giving them nutrients and watering them. Our recitation of the *sutra* reminds us to practice loving-kindness in our daily actions.

In daily living it is of utmost importance that we apply *metta* by way of speech and action, helping others and understanding their goodness, and understanding how difficult it is to be good. To be good is like cultivating a crop; you have to water, manure and look after the crop. It doesn't come up unless you give it the proper support.

—Bhikkhuni Kusuma, *Living in Peace*

According to the words of the Buddha, *metta* has a far wider significance and a much more extensive implication than ordinary affection or warm feelings. The Pali word *metta* literally means “friendliness,” but it also means love with desire to help, to sacrifice self-interest for the well-being of others, without exclusion. The recitation of the *Metta Sutra* is important, but acting for the good of all is most important.

The Buddha taught that we should love all beings as a mother loves her child. If we can do this even to a small extent, the world will become happier and more peaceful place.

A SIMPLE METTA PRACTICE:

1. Take a few deep breaths and let them out slowly and quietly.
2. Focus on deepening your receptivity to loving-kindness and compassion. Offer yourself the space to really open your heart today and allow stillness and love to bloom within you.
3. To help yourself connect with the energies of loving-kindness and the heart, say some lines from the *Metta Sutra*:

Metta Sutra

Send loving-kindness to yourself. *Really love yourself, and wish for yourself to be happy:*

May I be free from anger.
 May I be free from sadness.
 May I be free from pain.
 May I be free from difficulties.
 May I be free from suffering.
 May I be healthy.
 May my body be healthy and strong.
 May I be filled with loving-kindness.
 May I be happy.
 May I be really happy.
 May I be at peace.

Spread this loving-kindness outward. *Offer metta to those you see during your day—loved ones and friends, people you feel neutral about and people toward whom you have negative feelings:*

May my family and friends and all I encounter be free from difficulties.
 May they be free from pain and sadness.
 May they be free from attachment, anger and ill-will.
 May they be free from suffering.
 May they be healthy and happy.
 May they be at peace.
 May they have ease of well-being.

Send love now to people you don't know everywhere on this earth and all beings everywhere in life. *Just give metta to the ten directions, to all living beings without exception, without any special reference. All are one, all are worthy of equal blessings, equal love:*

May all people on the planet be free from suffering.
 May they be free from pain, grief, and despair.
 May they be happy, truly happy.
 May they be at peace.

May all beings in the universe be free from suffering.
 May all beings in all universes, everywhere, be free from suffering.
 May they be well and happy.
 May they be at peace.

May all beings of all kinds, in all directions be happy and at peace.
 Above and below, near and far, high and low.
 All types of beings. human and non-human, seen and unseen.
 All the animals and birds, and fishes.
 All beings and creatures, with no exceptions.
 May they all be happy.
 May they be free.

I open my heart and accept loving-kindness of every being and creature in return. I let that love into my heart and I share the benefits of this meditation with every one:

*May all beings be well and happy.
 May there be peace.*

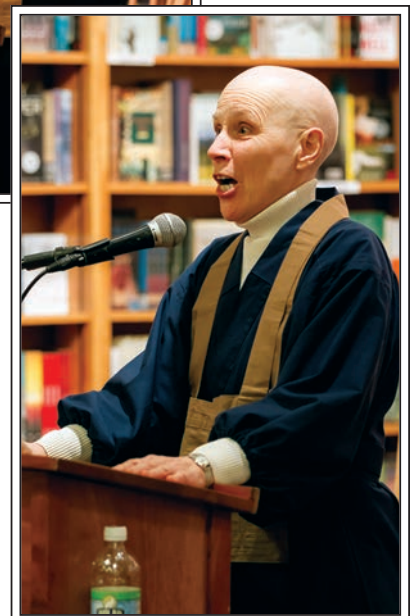
The Discourse on Loving-Kindness

While the Buddha was staying at Savatthi, a group of monks proceeded to a forest to spend the rainy season (vassana). The tree deities inhabiting this forest were worried by their arrival, as they had to descend from their tree abodes and dwell on the ground. They hoped, however, the monks would leave soon; but finding that the monks would stay the vassana period of three months, they harassed them in various ways during the night with the intention of scaring them away.

Living under such conditions became impossible, so the monks went to the Buddha and informed him of their difficulties. Thereupon the Buddha instructed them in the *Metta Sutra* and advised them to return equipped with this sutra for their protection.

The monks went back to the forest, and practicing the instruction received, permeated the whole atmosphere with their radiant thoughts of metta, or loving-kindness. The deities were so affected by this power of love that they allowed them to meditate in peace.

—Translated from the Pali by Piyadassi Thera



Reverends Byakuren Judith Ragir and Teijo Munnich giving animated talks during *Receiving the Marrow* book signing and presentation at Malaprops Bookstore in downtown Asheville, NC.

A Bow to Women's Wisdom

Receiving the Marrow: Teachings on Dogen by Soto Zen Women Priests

—edited by Eido Frances Carney, Temple Ground Press

This 2012 release, featuring the writing of Rev. Munnich and ten other contemporary women Soto Zen teachers, continues to garner good attention in the Zen literary world. Following is an excerpt from a review by Steven Heine that appeared in the Spring 2013 issue of *Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly* (www.thebuddhadharma.com).

Nearly eight hundred years ago, the celebrated Japanese Zen master Dogen gave a remarkable sermon revealing his egalitarian attitude toward women, an attitude reflected in both his teachings and writings. With the publication of *Receiving the Marrow*, a collection of essays edited by Eido Frances Carney, eleven accomplished Zen women priests share their understanding of Dogen's teachings, as well as their appreciation.

In her introduction, Carney, the founding abbess and teacher at the Olympia Zen Center in Washington, lauds Soto Zen's "egalitarian founder" for setting "the stage for women to come forward and stand as equals in a clerical world that had rejected them as full members of the institution." Indeed, from his first monastery in Kyoto to his years at Eihei-ji temple in the remote mountains, evidence suggests Dogen supported both nuns and female lay practitioners. This favorable attitude toward women is most evident in Dogen's sermon *Raihaitokuzui* (*Receiving the Marrow and Bowing*), from which this new book takes its title.

In the sermon, Dogen suggests that if a monk recognizes an awakened female teacher and bows to her in homage, he demonstrates his "excellence as a student." Here Dogen also recalls how two Chinese nuns, Moshan and Miaoxin, otherwise little known in Zen lore, taught a number of male monastics and outsmarted them in Zen dialogues. What caused Dogen to take such a bold stance in medieval Japan, a time when the role of women was suppressed both inside and outside Buddhist temples? One rationale suggests he had observed a more open-minded approach toward women in mainland China and wished to foster the same in his own movement. Another possibility is that like other teachers in the new wave of Japanese Buddhist schools (including Nichiren, Shinran, and Eizon), Dogen wanted to appeal to a wider audience. A third explanation holds that Dogen, who had renounced his aristocratic background to pursue the dharma, remained committed to the doctrine of nonduality in all of its manifestations. This included supporting gender equality and resisting any tendency to demean or marginalize any demographic group.

In *Receiving the Marrow*, the female contributors interpret the *Shobogenzo* (Treasury of the True Dharma-Eye), Dogen's main body of writing, which consists of sermons delivered during the peak of his career, including *Raihaitokuzui*. The contributors, all priests from various Soto Zen lineages, were born and trained in the West, although several also practiced for a time in Japan. The lineages they represent include those of prominent Japanese masters who taught in America, such as Shunryu Suzuki, Dainin Katagiri, Taizen Maezumi, and Shohaku Okumura, as well as those of their American students, including Mel Weitsman and Bernie Glassman.

Several of the essays, including Teijo Munnich's analysis of the fascicle *Bendowa* (Discourse about How to Practice the Way), combine careful readings of the text with particularly insightful interpretations. The *Bendowa* is the opening section of one of the two main versions of the *Shobogenzo* (the 95-fascicle version as opposed to the 75-fascicle one). It deals with the doctrine of *jijuyu zanmai* (the samadhi of self-enjoyment). Munnich introduces the image of a dancer to illustrate this idea; she talks about the majestic feeling of the dharma dancing through the practitioner.

This is our second
featured review
of *Receiving the
Marrow*



Great Tree Sister Sanghas

The following groups host Rev. Munnich on a regular basis and conduct their own programming. For their schedules, please be in touch with the designated contact people or visit the organization's website.

Charlotte Zen Meditation Society

Harmony House, 726 East Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28203
[www.meetup.com/
Charlotte-Zen-Meditation-Society/](http://www.meetup.com/Charlotte-Zen-Meditation-Society/)

Spartanburg Zen Sangha

Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg
210 Henry Place, Spartanburg, SC 29304
David Höki Stack: d.r.stack@charter.net
1-954-214-2157

Winged Wisdom, Savannah GA

Contact Susan Lamb at sblamb@aol.com

Zen Center of Asheville (ZCA)

Morning Zazen:

Monday-Friday: 6 am—One 40 minute period.
Saturday: 6 am—Two 40 minute periods with a 10 minute kinhin followed by the Heart Sutra chant. There is also an optional 8 am zazen period and Heart Sutra chant on all but the first Saturday.

Wednesday Evening Zazen/Lecture:

Zazen 7 pm • Lecture-discussion 7:30-8:30 pm
(zcasheville.org/lecturestudy.htm —for speakers)
Rev. Teijo Munnich's 2013 ZCA lecture dates:
May 8, 22 / June 12, 26 / July 10, 31 / Aug none
Sept 11, 25 / Oct 16, 30 / Nov 13, 27 / Dec 11

Zazen Instruction 1st Wednesdays at 6 pm

—with sign-up by email or phone message

All-Day Sit 3rd Saturdays.

—with sign-up by email or phone message

NOTE: ZCA's telephone is message system only. Someone from the center will return your call. We are a non-resident center and share the space with several other Buddhist groups.

Reviewed by Steven Heine

Excerpt reprinted with permission from:

Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly

www.thebuddhadharma.com/

web-archive/category/book-reviews

To purchase a copy of *Receiving the Marrow*,
send a \$20 check (\$18 plus \$2 postage) to:

Attention: Book Order
Great Tree Zen Temple
679 Lower Flat Creek Road
Alexander, NC 28701



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.

Great Tree Schedule of Events for 2013

MAY

MAY 3-8: Sesshin

MAY 24-27: Beginner's Mind Retreat at SDRC

For details and to register, go to www.southernndharma.org

JUNE

JUNE 5-29: Women in Buddhism, Pajapati's Path

This three-week residential intensive offers an opportunity to anyone for practice and study at Great Tree. For college students there is an option of college credit through Mars Hill College (students from other colleges can register as a guest at Mars Hill and transfer credits to their college). The course has been designed by Rev. Munnich and Dr. Katherine Meacham, Professor of Philosophy and Chair of General Studies at Mars Hill College.

FEE: \$1,500. + 100 non-refundable application fee. Additional charges for credit (arranged through Mars Hill College); Payment plan available with early registration.

JUNE 7-12: Sesshin

JULY

JULY 5-7: Sesshin

JULY 12-14: Teen Retreat

Begins Friday at 5 pm and ends Sunday at 4 pm

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

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

JULY 22-24: Children's Retreat

Begins Monday at 4 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. It will include meditation, chanting, study, discussion, and work. Activities may include arts and 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

AUG. 2-4: Zen Mind, Writing Mind, led by Peggy Tabor Millin

Starts at 5 pm Friday; ends at noon Sunday

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," was a saying of Zen master Shunryu Suzuki, and 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. In writing, most of us are bound up by shoulds learned from teachers, parents, and our own self-doubt. What if we had beginner's mind and simply befriended the words? We will write and read in circle in the morning. You will have afternoon time to explore writing on your own. Silence, solitude, community, and practice (both meditation and writing practice) are the four pillars of the writer's life. You need not be a writer, and no meditation experience is required to attend or write. Come with an open mind and empty notebook, and leave with an open heart and a notebook full of inspiration.

FEE: Non-members \$175; members \$150

AUG. 31: Practice Day

Mindful Morning and Active Afternoon

9 am-noon: Meditation, dharma talk, discussion

12:30-1:30 pm: Lunch

1:30-4 pm: Work practice, yoga. We will end the day with tea together at 4 pm.

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

FEE: Suggested dana, \$40

SEPTEMBER

SEPT. 1: Great Tree 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 info@greattreetemple.org or by phone to 828-645-2085. Carpool if possible, or ask about off-site parking-shuttle option.

FEE: Dana

OCTOBER

OCT. 4-9: Sesshin

OCT. 10-13: Anattasati Magga Retreat, led by Nancy Spence

Anattasati Magga means "Let the world take care of itself." This three-day retreat will offer participants the rare opportunity to absorb Great Tree's silence and stillness, with no formal Dharma topic. The daily schedule includes sitting, walking and working meditation, Dharma classes and study periods, and meals, all in silence except for lectures. Nancy Spence is the teacher and guide of Anattasati Magga, a Soto Zen sangha for the laity. In 1977 Spence received Zen training at Vichara Bodhiyana in California. She leads monthly Buddhist services, offers individual spiritual guidance, and leads meditation retreats in both North Carolina and California. She holds a master's degree in psychology and has a private counseling practice. She is the author of *Back to Basics: An Awareness Primer* and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead: An Adaptation for Reading Aloud to the Dead*.

FEE: \$225

NOVEMBER

NOV. 1-6: Sesshin

NOV. 29 – DEC. 4: Rohatsu Sesshin

DECEMBER

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

DEC. 26-31: End of the Year Sesshin

FEE: Non-members \$300; Members \$260

DEC. 31: New Year's Eve

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

Come join us on 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. If you plan to attend, please let us know by email at info@greattreetemple.org or by phone at 828-645-2085 so we can send you a more detailed schedule.

REGISTRATION FOR GREAT TREE EVENTS

TO LEARN MORE OR REGISTER ON-LINE, VISIT WWW.GREATTREEMPLE.ORG
 TIP: PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM FOR REGISTRATIONS INSTEAD OF CUTTING OUT.

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@greattreemple.org

FEES: 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 memo line. This secures your reservation. Registration closes when the event fills or 3 days prior to the event: forms and payment in full must be complete 7 days prior. We do not have credit card processing on site. Please indicate the event on the memo line of your check.

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: _____

Are you a member? Yes No *Members have received verification from Great Tree by mail or email in the last 90 days and may opt to apply member's fees.*

Diet / Allergies / Needs: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Their Phone: _____

Physician / Phone / Insurance etc. if applicable: _____

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

Men and women are both 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 cleaning up duties. If you can only attend part of a sesshin, you are still welcome. 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, please come on Friday and attend at least the weekend option (Friday 5 pm – Sunday noon).

COST: 2 NIGHTS (weekend): \$150 FOR MEMBERS, \$175 NON-MEMBERS

3 NIGHTS: \$175 FOR MEMBERS, \$225 NON-MEMBERS

5 NIGHTS: \$250 FOR MEMBERS, \$300 NON-MEMBERS

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 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 dormitory style.

ONGOING PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

Family Meditation ~ All Welcome: 10 :30 am – Noon

Family Meditation is open to all ages and includes a short period of meditation, formal tea and Dharma teaching with related activity such as creative playmaking, origami, outside walking meditation, crafts, etc. We end with a potluck snack and socializing. Family Meditation is usually held on the last Sunday of the month. If you would like to be put on the Family Meditation email list, contact Paige Gilchrist at pmgilchrist@gmail.com. — **Fee: Dana.**

2013: May 26 off in Aug Oct 27
 June 30 Sept 29 Nov 24
 July 28 – *Sangha Picnic*

Practice Period Fall 2013: Sept. 25 – Dec. 14

Tuesday Meditation and Study Group: 3:30–5:30 pm

This ongoing, informal discussion group centers on a specific text. It is fine to come just for zazen without being part of the discussion. However, please let us know by phone or email if you plan to attend. To receive weekly reminders and schedule updates along with the suggested reading, contact info@greattreemple.org. — **Fee: Dana.**

Spring 2013: Jan. 15-May 21

(no meeting April 9 or May 7 due to sesshin)

Fall-Winter 2013: Sept. 17-Dec. 17

(no meeting Oct. 8, Nov. 5, or Dec. 3 due to sesshin)

Thursday Morning Sangha: 6 – 11 am each Thursday morning

Meditation, chanting, breakfast, communal work. Come for any part and stay for as much as you wish.

Sunday Sangha ~ All Welcome: 10:30 – Noon

Early Yoga 9-10am

Sangha is community. Sangha Sundays are an opportunity to build community, share the Dharma, and practice together. Sangha Sundays are usually on the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated. Everyone is welcome!

2013: May 19 off in Aug Nov 17
 June 16 Sept 15 Dec 15
 July 21 Oct 20

Great Tree Saturday Work Days for 2013: 9:30 am – 4 pm

Come anytime and stay for as long as you can. Please let us know what hours you expect to be here.

2013: May 18, June 15, July 20, Oct 19, Sep 14, Nov 16

Stalking Buddha

If you go far enough east you will end up in the west.

No matter how fast you move you will only see His back.

Turn around, there is nothing for you to leave behind.

All this coming and going—North, South...So, can you tell me?

Where have you come from?

— **Chimyo Atkinson** Aichi Semon Nisodo, December 2012



A YEAR IN REVIEW GALLERY



The Mother Child Retreat February 2013

—by Lina Yokote

My experience at the Mother and Child Retreat was really what I had hoped for. Just spending time with my mother, in the mountains having fun with friends old and new. The first thing I thought when my mom said we were coming was yes! This was what I had been wait-



ing for peace & quiet. Well almost quiet, the loudest and most fun noise there was when the kids were doing fun activities, like tag, hide-and-seek and Mean Teacher. I led most of these activities because I was the oldest and the Mean Teacher. And of course there was the meditation, thirty minutes for the moms and five minutes for the kids and me. Of course we had the option to stay and meditate longer but we wanted to play instead. After meditation we would have chores, like kitchen cleanup, cleaning the zendo (meditation space) or collect wood. All of the children opted for collecting wood because we got to go outside in the woods. I took the wagon along with three or four of the girls. I would let them take turns riding in the wagon on the way down, we would collect wood, stack it neatly in the wagon and when the wagon was full we headed back up along with the girls help of holding down the wood in the wagon so it would not fall out. That's the good thing about the Mother Child retreat - we help each other. In fact that was the essence of Teijo's teaching for the weekend. She taught us about loving kindness meditation. I thought it was nice that we were able to do just that...be loving and kind. I would go there every chance I got.

Philip Toy 1943–2013

Philip (*True Mountain of Insight*) Toy died March 4 of metastasized lung cancer in his Black Mountain home and mindfulness practice center (Cloud Cottage Community of Mindful Living) with his wife Judith and family and friends by his side.

In 2005, Philip was ordained as a core member of Thich Nhat Hanh's Order of Interbeing (Tiep Hien) in recognition of his work as a beloved Zen teacher, both in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

As Quakers-Buddhists-peacemakers, Philip and Judith travelled to Romania to aid orphaned children, led puppetry and poetry workshops on their farm in New Hope, Pennsylvania and mindfulness retreats in the US, Ireland and Scotland. They taught mindfulness in a medium security prison and founded three Sanghas, including the Cloud Cottage Sangha in North Carolina.

Philip's book of poems, "Opposing Traffic Has Extended Green," was published in 1993 by Alpha Beat Press, New Hope. He was editor, with Judith, and publisher of Cloud Cottage Editions since 2010.



The beautiful, meaningless

Whirlwind of no Buddha,

None at all, none.

— Philip Toy

Welcome Great Tree's New Board Members

Priscilla Myoshu Yokote—Gosh, how to write a bio....studies, practices, learning, experiencing, Native American spirituality, Taoism, World religions and cultures, love of people, confusion about people, Zen Buddhism, Japan, family, children, death, art, explorations, yoga, love, nature. Life in relationship, beautiful when we allow it to be. And thanks to Great Tree and all my teachers along the way.



Jayne Harnett-Hargrove is a traditional artist; cross-trained in classical/fine and theater arts, costume to couture, commercial and interpretive installation. She studied at Parson's School of Design in New York City and began her theater career as a milliner at the San Francisco Opera. Locally she works on book illustrations and designs for the Asheville Lyric Opera. Jayne and her children Drew and Chloe have enjoyed being part of Great Tree's sangha for a few years. She is happy to be working with the board towards Great Tree's future.



Also continuing to serve is longtime board member **Stephanie Jones-Byrne**.



Precepts to be Offered April 2014

—by Sue (Shozen) Thornbury

Jukai, a process by which Buddhist practitioners formally accept the precepts, is scheduled for April 6, 2014. Participants are asked to commit to attending a retreat in January at which they will sew their rakusu. A rakusu is a small version of the Buddha's robe and is sewn by hand in the pattern of a rice field. It symbolizes all beings living in peace and harmony. Participants are also asked to spend the Jukai weekend together in sesshin and participate in the Sunday afternoon ceremony.

Anyone interested in receiving the precepts is asked to contact Rev. Teijo Munnich (teijo@greattreemple.org) and submit a one-page description of their practice and intent to participate in Jukai.

The first phrase of the prayer recited before one dons a rakusu is "Great robe of liberation," and I can honestly say that, for me, committing to an ongoing practice by adhering as best as I can to the precepts has been liberating indeed. The path becomes a little bit clearer when the steps are there!

I once knew a man who would come to community meetings and begin his presentations by introducing himself and saying, "I belong." We used to smile because we knew just what he meant! In order to learn, grow, and share in anything, we need to feel that we qualify in some way. Jukai formalized for me that sense of community and unified path. It is a commitment to continue to try to follow this essentially healthier way of thinking, acting, being. I did not become a saint, I did not become enlightened...but I became lighter.

I would urge all who are thinking of continuing on the Buddha's path to consider becoming "lighter."

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

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So far we have raised 12% of our goal to cut the mortgage in half. Deep gassho to all who have contributed toward the Crane Project! It was a joy to make and string cranes and send you all some of the positive energy that is abundant at Great Tree.

Your dana of money and work have been incredibly meaningful in helping us catch up with our bills and pay the mortgage these past six months. We're asking for your continued support in reaching our goal of financial stability. (Please see the letter below.) The board has come up with a few creative fund-raising projects. If you have any ideas for raising funds or inspiring more participation in Great Tree's mission please let us know.

Please contact us with your great ideas at info@greattretemple.org.

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: \$ _____

- 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: _____

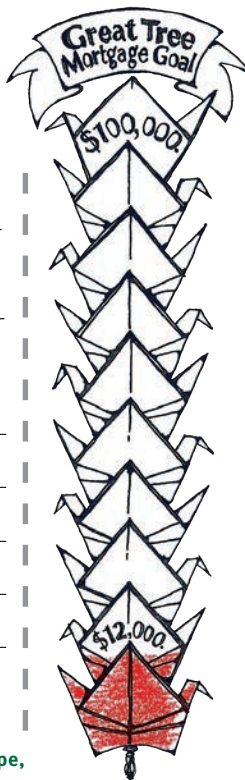
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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

Mail Great Tree this donation form in **YOUR** stamped envelope, or use our online form at www.greattretemple.org/cranes/



Dear Sangha (Love Pledges),

You heard from us last fall about our Crane Project, an effort to cut Great Tree's mortgage in half. Many of you contributed to this and we are so grateful. We are still far from our goal. Now we're coming back to you, as we do each year at this time, to invite you to make an annual pledge to Great Tree. Your support in this way will help us to continue with our efforts of trying to cut the mortgage in half by raising \$100,000.

As we mentioned in the fall, current pledges, donations and retreat fees do not cover our costs each month and have not for some time. If we are not able to get Great Tree on a more solid and sustainable financial footing we will be faced with very difficult choices and drastic changes. Our largest expense continues to be our mortgage. Our bold, but we think achievable, goal is to cut it in half over the next year. We need your help to make that happen.

Your pledge gives you:

- Membership with Great Tree Zen Temple
- Discounts on Great Tree programs and
- A crane with a Metta message, a wish of loving-kindness.

Please read all about Metta, one of our themes at Great Tree this year, on the first page of this spring newsletter. It's a practice of sending loving-kindness to all who need it. Thank you for considering sending us your Metta in response to this annual request. If you have pledged in the past, we hope you will renew. We would like to know that you're still on board.

Deep Gassho in behalf of everyone at Great Tree,

Teijo Munnich and the Great Tree Board

