

Great Tree Zen Temple

Winter, 2019

*Material goods, the teachings,
Both are perfectly complete offerings
The value of which cannot be measured.
Perfection of Giving (Dana Paramita)
Is a means sufficient
To permeate the entire Dharma World
With equal benefit.**



Dear Great Tree Sangha,

Perfection of Giving is an ongoing practice. It is a practice of giving without expectation. The Diamond Sutra reminds us that giving is a spiritual practice, one of the six paramitas. All of the paramitas encourage us to be unconditional in our practice.

Dogen Zenji tells us that when we devote ourselves to spiritual practice, the birds, trees, walls, grasses, and fences all expound the Dharma.

Dana is a practice of supporting the Dharma, which is anything that awakens us to our true nature. To participate in the practice of dana is a joyful act, and this spirit of unconditional giving awakens us to the interdependence we live within.

Supporting a temple or monks is the traditional way of giving in Asia. A monk's practice is to share the Dharma and to receive without discrimination. This is a very powerful practice for both giver and receiver.

Please recognize this opportunity to support Great Tree as a practice of supporting the Dharma. All gifts are perfectly complete offerings, the value of which cannot be measured.

Deep gassho.

大樹



Looking forward to seeing all of you this coming year

Ongoing Study of Dogen's Teaching about Avalokitesvara

We continue our study of *Shobogenzo Kannon (Avalokitesvara)* using commentary by Rev. Shohaku Okumura. Shohaku's commentary is based on several hundred years of commentary by Japanese masters. This is a great resource because these commentaries haven't been translated into English, so aren't available for most of us, and Shohaku admits that without them, he couldn't understand Dogen's writings.

We will have five more sessions beginning in February or March. So far we have discussed the introduction, and in the spring will begin to look at Dogen's text. Meetings will be arranged with those who express interest in participating. If you want to join, write to teijo@greattreetemple.org.

All-Day Sittings/Days of Mindfulness

This year we had our first Parent & Child Day of Mindfulness. We talked about what mindfulness is, read a story about mindfulness, and mindfully rolled out our own pizza dough and made "Mindful Pizzas." We also made "Mind Globes," a variation on snow globes, to show how the thoughts in the mind settle when we sit quietly.

We also had Days of Mindfulness to commemorate Dogen and Keizan Zenji (January 26 and September 29); Shakyamuni's Death and Nirvana (February 15); and Katagiri Roshi (March 1)—a nice way to slow down and breathe in the midst of the busyness of life.

Thursday Mornings & Saturdays

We invite everyone to join part or all of these practice days, which begin with early morning zazen and include study & work practice, the three elements of practice mentioned by Dogen Zenji.

Poetry & Pie



Sangha Work at Great Tree



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PASSINGS



Jan “Jinen” Howard, beloved Great Tree Sangha Member, left the human realm on October 29, 2019.

Jan Jinen Howard

Jinen came from Savannah to Great Tree as a resident in July of 2009 and moved to this area around 2011. She received the Bodhisattva Precepts in 2010 and the name “Jinen,” which means Compassionate Mindfulness. Jinen helped lead multiple Youth Retreats, headed up the long-range planning for Great Tree, served as tenzo (head cook) for two years, served as Rev. Munnich’s scheduling assistant, and contributed her gifts in countless other ways. She will be missed.

We send much love and support to Jan’s wife, Trish Brumbaugh, and to Jan’s canine friend, Cody.

Lia Atkinson

Lia was 20 years old and came with me to Great Tree back in 2010. She loved almost everyone who came to visit Great Tree (dogs were the exception). Like most cats she was never a pet, but a sweet and honest old friend who tolerated much and asked very little. We miss her so much.

– *Chimyo Atkinson*



Buddha’s Enlightenment Celebration & Crafts Sale

At Great Tree Temple – Dec. 8, 2019
12–6 p.m.— Ceremony is at 2 p.m.
craft sale open through New Year’s

Ways to Give

Cash, checks, and money orders are always welcome.

WEBSITE

www.greattreetemple.org/giving

• Click the “Donate” button and make a one-time contribution or recurring gift via PayPal.

• The pledge form can be downloaded and mailed with a check.

ONLINE BANKING

Contact your bank to set up recurring payments from your account.

IRA WITHDRAWALS

After age 70½, you must make an annual withdrawal (Required Minimum Distribution) from an IRA account. You will not be taxed on the withdrawal if you direct the account trustee to make a qualified charitable distribution directly from the IRA. If you choose to contribute to Great Tree in this way, please notify our office manager so that she is aware that you are the donor (contact information below). The contribution must be deposited into Great Tree’s bank account by the end of the year to be included in the current year’s mandatory withdrawal, so be sure to allow plenty of time for processing. Please consult your tax advisor about making a gift in this way.

SHARES OF STOCK OR MUTUAL FUNDS

Instead of selling a stock that has appreciated in value, you may avoid paying capital gains tax by donating the stock to Great Tree via the Western North Carolina Community Foundation. Consult your tax advisor about making such a gift and contact our office manager about the process (contact information below).

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Shopping at AmazonSmile is the same as shopping at Amazon.com, except that 0.5% of the purchase price from eligible items is donated to a charity of your choosing. Enter “smile.amazon.com” in your web browser. Or, if you have an Amazon account, log in, enter “smile.amazon” in the search bar, and follow instructions to add AmazonSmile to your account (your shopping cart, wish list, and account settings stay the same). On your first visit to AmazonSmile, select Great Tree as the charitable organization to receive donations. Adding a bookmark makes it easier to return.

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info@greattreetemple.org 828.645.2085

Great Tree Zen Temple

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All charitable contributions are deductible as allowed by law.

