

# Myōju

Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia



December 2021. Issue 86

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# Editorial

*I vow with all beings, from this life on throughout countless lives, to hear the True Dharma; that upon hearing it, no doubt will arise in me, nor will I lack in faith.*

*Eihei Koso Hotsuganmon  
– Zen Master Dogen’s Vow*

Welcome to the December 2021 issue of Myoju magazine, the final in our series on the theme of Listening, with a focus on Vow.

The Dharma talk featured in this issue is taken from a Teisho given by Ekai Osho during retreat #68 which ended in late November. In his Teisho, Ekai Osho looks at the teaching of the *Maha Prajna Paramita Sutra*; the cultivation of *Prajna* or Wisdom as a balance point to which we continually return.

Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton, author, translator and the Guiding Teacher at Ancient Dragon Zen Gate in Chicago, Illinois, has generously permitted us to publish an edited excerpt of his interview with *Carving the Divine: What is Soto Zen?* “Zen is about embodying and expressing Buddha in our body, in our lives, in our everyday activity. We learn this deep communion with Buddha-reality through Zen meditation, zazen, and then we work on how to express this in our everyday activity.”

After two years of online retreat practice, residential retreats will re-commence in April 2022. The Adekate Conference Centre has for many years been home to Jikishoan’s residential retreats. Planning is underway to demolish the Adekate site and rebuild a new facility. Demolition begins in January. As we will not be visiting Adekate for the foreseeable future, our centre pages are dedicated to remembering our time there. The new retreat venue will be the Casa Pallotti Retreat Centre in Warburton, just outside Melbourne.

My thanks go out to everyone who has submitted work to Myoju throughout the year, and to the production team. It is only with your support and commitment that Myoju can continue.

Gassho,

Margaret Kokyu Lynch — Coordinator  
On behalf of Ekai Korematsu Osho — Editor

# Myoju

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**Cover Image:** Pagoda and Rainbow, 1900-1910. Ohara Kosan, 1877-1945. Original from the Rijksmuseum, digitally enhanced by Rawpixel.

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# Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted in **March 2022**.

Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, reviews of books or online materials, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs.

The content deadline is **23 January 2022** and the theme is **Harmony: Self-care**.

# Welcome to Jikishoan

Jikishoan is a Zen Buddhist Community based in Melbourne, Australia. Throughout the year Jikishoan runs an active learning program under the guidance of Ekai Korematsu Osho, Abbot of Tokozan Jikishoan Temple in Melbourne, and Director of the Zen and Integrated Buddhist Studies program.

Ekai Osho has taught Soto Zen Buddhism in Japan, USA, India, Australia and New Zealand for 40 years. He established Jikishoan in Melbourne in 1999. Tokozan Home Temple was inaugurated in 2018 and is the first Soto Zen temple in Australia.

The name of the community, Jikishoan, encapsulates its spirit: 'Jiki' means straightforward or direct; 'sho' means proof or realisation and 'an' means hut. The practice is the proof—there is no proof or realisation separate from that. It is direct, here and now.

Jikishoan offers a range of Zen practice activities based on *Bendoho*—the original way of practice introduced by the 13th century Japanese Zen Master, Eihei Dogen. Information about courses, workshops, retreats and weekly meditation can be found in the teaching schedule on the last page of this magazine and on the website at [jikishoan.org.au](http://jikishoan.org.au). Any enquiries are warmly welcomed.

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## Bright Pearl

A note on the title of this magazine.



Master Gensa Shibi said as an expression of the truth, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl.' One day a monk asked Master Gensa, 'I have heard your words that the whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. How should we understand this?' The Master answered, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?'

Later the Master asked the monk, 'How do you understand this?' The monk replied, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?' The Master said, 'I see that you are struggling to get inside a demon's cave in a black mountain ... even surmising and worry is not different from the bright pearl. No action nor any thought has ever been caused by anything other than the bright pearl. Therefore, forward and backward steps in a demon's black-mountain cave are just the one bright pearl itself.'

Excerpted from Zen Master Dogen's *Shobogenzo*, 'Ikka-no-Myoju' (One Bright Pearl)

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# PRAJNA PARAMITA

The *Maha Prajñā Hridaya Sutra* is the core text of the Mahayana and of our practice. The core practice is the basic form, zazen. Traditionally, what is being cultivated is *prajñā* or wisdom, the wisdom of Manjushri. This cultivation requires a certain engagement. I can explain it with words, but that is just a concept. By putting it into practise you are cultivating your quality of authentic being.

When we use the term practice, we shouldn't use it casually. If you are unclear you end up practising according to your emotions or your habits of 'pick and choose'. That's not practice, that is habit, an automatic response or impulse. You're trying to feel good and to avoid feeling bad. Sometimes when you come to practice you don't feel so good, but you make the effort—developing quality and experience in various situations. Situations differ. Each time you practise there is a different condition, sometimes favourable and sometimes unfavourable. When you come to practice in an unfavourable condition there is a lot to learn in terms of improvement. That is the nature of practice. Instead of pick and choose, take everything as it is, then credible learning appears. The various experiences you bring with you, the different conditions, the changing circumstances, all help to nurture the ground of your practice.

We recite the *Prajñā Paramita Hridaya Sutra* as a basic text. It was originally written in Sanskrit and translated into Chinese characters. At 273 characters, it is very concise. It expresses what *prajñā* is. It not only describes *prajñā* but is based on the practice of Wisdom. That is the very point. If the sutra is to take effect, you need to memorise it and put it into practise. We recite it whether we understand it or not. If you haven't memorised it, it is like borrowing something which is not yours.

The Heart Sutra is about total engagement into activity. You are the person of the moment, engaging with body, breath, and mind consciousness. Conventionally it is the work of the mind to conceptualise and express. This mind is what is brought into question. Are you seeking or cultivating Buddha mind or the human mind, delusions? That is the very heart of it. This *prajñā* is the wisdom of the Buddha. It's not discriminative wisdom or knowledge, it is wisdom that comes before fabrication. Concepts are fabricated by the mind. The practice requires certain conventions or rules that bring you to the place where you can open up. The whole being embodies it, bypassing fabrications, and discriminative thinking. The mind opens up. This wisdom is very direct.

*Avalokiteshvara, when practising deep prajñā paramita...*

The word *deep* is very important. Deep to the point beyond our discriminative thinking. Deep is the same as *prajñā paramita*. This wisdom doesn't belong to the area of discrimination. When you are free from discrimination this wisdom emerges because you perceive the nature of reality as it is—empty.

The main character is Avalokiteshvara, representing the totality of the nature of reality—truth or wisdom. The essence of this totality is compassion, all-inclusiveness. No differentiation between yourself and others, full of compassion. Compassion is the other side of *prajñā* or wisdom, no separation. This compassion is not what we might ordinarily think of as compassion – someone who is very kind, always has a nice word, never yelling. Perhaps someone's yelling is the greatest act of compassion. No discrimination.

Coming back to this place of non-discrimination requires some work. Cultivation is about coming back—how fast



can you come back to this point? How quickly can you open up and include? If you are under the influence of good and bad, right and wrong, ugly and beautiful, attached to any of these, you need to transform and find a reliable balancing point. Good and bad, right and wrong are of a time. Usually something good means something is working in your favour, something bad is disagreeable. When time shifts, everything changes. You cannot fix on any particular point in time, good and bad become baseless.

*Clearly saw that all five aggregates are empty, and thus relieved all suffering...*

I'm sure many of you have studied this analytically. When you study the Heart Sutra analytically you are going down the same path as Shariputra. Shariputra is one of the ten great disciples. However, in this realm of the Mahayana, of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, he was taken as an example of discriminative, linear thinking, utilising his intellect when faced with the nature of reality.

*Shariputra, form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself form.*

The five *skandas* are nothing other than the aggregates, the various aspects of the self. Starting with form; the concrete, something objectified. It has form and colour, you can grasp it. The next aggregate is sensation, which comes through the five senses and is processed by the sixth sense, consciousness itself. Sensation comes straight in, it's not about good and bad, right and wrong. When something is hot it is hot, when it is cold it is cold. Accordingly, perception comes. You perceive the sensation as something. According to the condition, sensation comes in and then perception, with an immediacy, an urgency, you react on impulse—act automatically. The last is discriminative

consciousness. You have a reason for acting as you did. Shariputra diligently investigates all five aggregates and breaks them down one by one—form and colour, atoms and neutrons—and concludes that there is nothing there; empty. Not in the sense that there is no energy. It's not void or vacant.

Buddhism is not talking about something beyond our reach. It is about your own self, your body, breath, and mind consciousness finding its perfect balance point, not leaning in any particular direction, coming back to the very point of life. Energy moving out and coming back. That is the theme of the Heart Sutra, and that is the practice you have received from the lineage extending back to the Buddha. Straighten your back, return to the zero point, and from there to the vital source. Life moves, thoughts and feelings come and go, the functional aspects of life come and go but nonetheless, we come back to the balance point.

Doing *sanzen* is like that. For Zen Master Dogen, *sanzen* is body and mind cast off. Doing *shikantaza*, just coming back to sit, for the first time you achieve that point, arrive at the point which you cannot grasp. Isn't that wonderful? There is no need to worry about whether you have grasped it or not, free from your habitual mind. We are always worried about whether we are doing it right or wrong. We want to be sure we are doing the right *zazen*, the right *shikantaza*. That's not the point. Coming back to this point, there is no need to worry. Let go of your grasping. That is the zero point, *shunyata*. You are nothing but the actualisation of enlightenment in reality.

*Dharma talk given at Retreat Online #68, Teisho #2, 12 November 2021.*

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Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton

# WHAT IS SOTO ZEN?

AN INTERVIEW FROM CARVING THE DIVINE

*“Zazen is a physical practice—the practise of sitting upright, relaxed, paying attention and breathing. In the middle of that, thoughts and feelings come up, but we don’t try and get rid of them. A blank mind is not the point.”*

## What is Zen?

Zen involves meditation. That’s what the word Zen means. It’s also about embodying and expressing Buddha in our body, in our lives, in our everyday activity. We learn this deep communion with Buddha-reality through Zen meditation, zazen, and then we work on how to express this in our everyday activity.

## What is Soto Zen? What is its core teaching?

Soto Zen emphasises meditation and the teachings of Eihei Dogen Zenji, the founder in Japan, then back through the lineage to China which goes back to the 800s or 600s depending on how you want to see it. Soto Zen, as it is today in Japan and in the United States, emphasizes meditation, and how to express the awareness that we realise through meditation in our everyday activity, in our relationships, and in our responses to the difficulties in our world.

## When I hear about Soto Zen, people often talk of gradual enlightenment. Do you achieve a particular state of mind in zazen?

No not at all. It’s not about achieving some particular state of mind, and it’s not gradual—it’s sudden. Buddha means the awakened one, but it also means awakening and that is something that’s always available to everybody. It’s already there but we don’t know it. So, we take time to stop, and breathe, and feel what is happening with this body-mind, here, today, on our cushion, beyond our ideas of who we are and of what the world is. Those are just conditioned ideas.

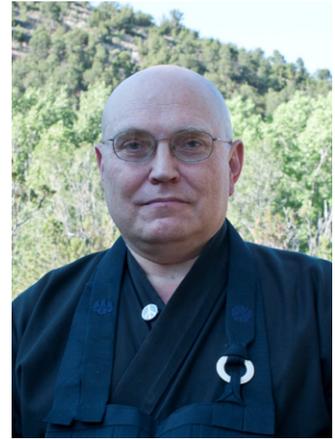
When we sit, we are sitting like Buddha; we are upright, relaxed, aware, paying attention. In Soto Zen we sit with our eyes open, usually facing the wall, facing ourselves, and facing all beings. Zazen practice is the *samadhi* of all beings, the concentration, the awareness of all beings. We don’t do this alone. We sit together in the meditation hall,

but we also sit together with all beings. When we sit by ourselves in our homes, we are together with all beings, we realize our deep communion with this deeper reality that includes everything.

Dogen Zenji says, the first time you sit, all of awakening is there. We practise regularly; daily or many times a week over the years because that awakening unfolds in many ways. It’s not about reaching some particular state of mind or state of being, it’s not about getting rid of thoughts. It’s about being present in the middle of our life, being fully present to our life and for our life and with all beings in our life. And how do we express this deeper immediate awareness? It’s not that we gradually realize it—we may gradually realize how this is already present—but it’s not about finding something that is not already here.

The Soto lineage, or *Caodong* in Chinese, goes back to the founders in China. There are many different lineages in Zen, so it’s not that ours is the only lineage. We study teachings from other lineages and parts of Soto Zen. We appreciate the buddhas and bodhisattvas, but we also appreciate the Ancestors. We say the Buddha Ancestors; the lineage of people going back to Shakyamuni Buddha 2,500 years ago, who kept this practice and teaching alive in every generation.

Both in China and Japan lineage was very important—less so in India. The Soto lineage started with a Chinese master named Dongshan Liangjie or Tozan Ryokai in Japanese. Master Dongshan lived in the 800s and he is credited with founding this particular lineage in Zen. There are many other good and wonderful lineages in Zen, but the name Caodong or Soto goes back to Master Dongshan, and before him to the Sixth Ancestor, Hui Neng and several ancestors before him, all of whom we study amongst many others. One thing that they emphasized was not getting caught up in stages but rather a sense of this immediate awareness of deeper reality that’s always available. It’s not about stages of accomplishment and then you get higher.



Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton

It's not about getting high! It's something that is present. Our practice is to deepen our realization of that and our expression of that.

**I often hear the word *Genjokoan*. Is it a special koan?**

*Genjokoan* is one of Zen Master Dogen's more famous writings. There are various translations of what the word *Genjokoan* means. The first part of it is to manifest. One translation in English is 'actualizing the fundamental point'. It's a longish essay; it was originally a letter to a layperson in Kyushu, the southern island of Japan.

There are a few expressions in *Genjokoan* that might be helpful. For example, "When you carry yourself forward to experience the myriad things, that is delusion." This is the delusion we all live in or train to. We carry ourselves; we project ourselves out onto the world. We think the world is out there, separate from ourselves. That is called delusion by Zen Master Dogen.

Then he says, "When the myriad things experience themselves—arise and experience themselves—that is awakening". This awakening includes each of us. When everything arises and experiences itself together, that is what Zen Master Dogen calls awakening or enlightenment.

In another line Zen Master Dogen says, "To study the Way, is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be awakened by myriad things, and body and mind of self and other drop away." The point is to study the self. The difficulty in zazen is not getting your legs into some funny lotus position, but that we see ourselves; we see our own patterns of grasping and anger and confusion.

Zazen is a physical practice—the practice of sitting upright, relaxed, paying attention and breathing. In the middle of that, thoughts and feelings come up, but we don't try and get rid of them. A blank mind is not the point. You can easily have an operation and get rid of your brain.

It's not about getting rid of thoughts, although there are times when there are spaces between the thoughts and that can be lovely. It's about being present in the middle of feelings, in the middle of thoughts. Our thoughts and feelings arise. Let them go. They may come up again. We see our delusion; our grasping and anger and confusion and we learn about our own patterns of reacting. The more we can become intimate with that and feel the way we react, the less we need to be pushed around by it. The more space we have not to react based on our karmic patterns of confusion and fear, the more chance we have to respond from something deeper.

Just keep sitting. Keep coming back to the wall. The thoughts and feelings come up. You don't have to be afraid of your thoughts and feelings. If you're uncomfortable in your sitting position just find a position that is, if not comfortable, at least one in which you can sit still and quiet for a while. If you have to change your sitting position, if it's extremely painful, then do it quietly. My way of practising with this is very gentle. It's not about reaching a particular way of being. Each person has their own way of being Buddha.

Zazen is like a performance art—you're performing Buddha; you're expressing Buddha on your seat, in your own way. A part of zazen is also finding your inner dignity and inner creativity. I encourage students to find their own way of being creative and expressive of their deepest understanding and deepest love in the world. That's what this zazen is about.

*Rev. Taigen is the Guiding Teacher at Ancient Dragon Zen Gate.*

*An edited transcript of an interview from the documentary film *Carving the Divine*. Transcribed by Margaret Lynch.*

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# SHUSHO TALK AT SANZEN-KAI

MARISHA ROTHMAN

In tonight's talk I'd like to give an overview of the Shuso role and talk about some of the qualities I have been developing in my training as a role model for the community, the support I have had in developing these qualities and the effect this has had on my practice and my life.

The novice Shuso is a role-model for the community. The Teacher appoints a head student for a retreat period and their domain is community level practice—a bit like Main Course B Sanzenkai practice. Ekai Osho uses the analogy of an adult learner driver who gets a learner's permit, then proceeds through the probationary period and finally gets a license to drive.

The main concern is in moving away from 'me, me, me' practice. Being a role model comes with responsibilities. It's also important to follow the rules—not creating one's own standards. You need to practise; gain experience, do a lot of zazen, be strong for the community whenever you are present, full of energy and an inspiration to others so they can also find the strength and motivation for practise.

I have created a retreat attendance plan to help me develop consistency and stability in my practice. I've outlined when I can do zazen and when I can do other activities, deciding on the number of activities I can attend and then following through with my commitment. In addition to the usual chanting and Doshi movements—offering incense and doing prostrations during services—the Shuso memorises a case and studies a Teisho text. Fortunately, the Shuso has good mentors like Ekai Osho and Katherine (Shoki). I have a support team: Tony (Benji), Shona (Shoki-ho) and Koun (Shuso-ho) and together we will follow through our retreat plan.

So how has this planning affected me? I've decided to commit to zazen sessions and meetings, Chosan and Teisho and because of that I've slowed down a bit. I've developed a steady routine and structure in my practice, which continues after retreats.

A second quality I've been developing is self-reflection. As part of my training, it's been important to learn how to reflect on my practice and my life. I have started keeping a personal journal, outlining the flow of the day in terms of my practice: waking up, going to bed, my lunch, my dinnertime, zazen, domestic chores, rest time, meetings and training. This personal journal helps me create consistency and discipline in my practice. It's easy to get lazy and distracted.

I can reflect upon what I am able to do and what I'm unable to do and I try not to get too disappointed if I haven't done everything I planned. Things happen.

Each day I try to complete my plan, but at times I find that difficult. I notice I tend to go with the flow and decide what to do on the day, rather than have every single hour planned out. If I don't plan anything for the day, then I can't decide what to do and I waste time, watching TV or looking at the internet or reading the newspaper. I've noticed I often go to bed late and then it is a struggle to wake for Gyoten Zazen. The personal journal is all a part of studying yourself.

A third quality I've worked on is self-care. Ekai Osho's formula of forty percent self-care, thirty percent practice and thirty percent challenge, is a good guide to follow. I've discovered the consequences of not taking care of my body and my health. During the final retreat of 2020 I went completely overboard with my attendance. I attended almost everything and wasn't paying attention to my health. By the end of the retreat, I had pneumonia. Not a great thing to end up with. But I recovered quickly, which was good.

I'm naturally an energetic, enthusiastic person and I've had to learn to harness these energies. I've learned to balance myself, especially during lockdown when I was restless and itching to get out. I really had to work at creating balance and taking care of myself.

I now spend more time on chanting practice, reading, having set rest periods, going for walks, and getting to bed early.

As the Shuso—the role model for this retreat—I am making an effort to model the pure forms of our practice. I'm here to give you energy, to encourage you. The qualities I'm developing: the consistency and stability, reflection and self-care are to ensure that we can continue Zazen in its pure form. That is what I aspire to each time I sit.

But there are things we need to ask ourselves. What are our barriers? What kinds of routines do we need to develop? What is important for self-care? I've asked myself these questions and hopefully I've inspired you to ask these questions of yourself. What can you do to encourage yourself to practice?

*This talk was given by student and Shuso Marisha Rothman at Sunday Sanzenkai on 14 November 2021.*

# GATHA RETREAT #68

## Cleaning altar

*fresh flowers  
trim candle  
clean incense bowl  
cleaning myself*

*Katherine Yeo  
21.11.2021 12.44pm*

## Nature's practice

*As the sun rises each morning  
as the fish swim by, at their leisure  
as birds fly off, in the clear sky  
I join the Sangha for Zen practice.*

*Tony Crivelli  
21.11.2021*

## Precept

*Humans and language, human language -  
When I hear something offensive,  
Opportunity arises  
Purifying reaction for the sake of all beings.*

*Shona Innes 9.47am  
23.11.2021*

## 2.a.m.

*Clattering rain  
Sudden squalls  
A naked walk through the garden  
Half a moon on my shoulder.*

*John Doshin Bolton  
15. 11. 2021*

## Untitled

*Enlightenment is easy, say the enlightened.  
To be free the monkey just relaxes its fist,  
but holding on seems too rewarding.  
Ah well, back to the cage.*

*Irwin Rothman  
07.11.2021*



*Illustration by Sally Richmond*

# A TRIBUTE

1999-

For several years I was part of the team that transformed the church camp recreation hall into a zendo for seven days of retreat practice.

Out go the brown couches, the ping pong tables, the chairs, the travel posters. We unlock the Jikishoan trailer parked outside the hall to reveal the magic treasure trove: wooden frames, calico sheeting, altars, candles and instruments, zafus and zabutons.

Then Osho pulls back the tarp on his trailer full of stuff from the Shiatsu College: tans, instruments and Buddhas, more zafus and zabutons. In two or three hours the miracle is complete: an airy light filled zendo, ready for 7 days of retreat.

Robin Laurie



*Preparing for the group photo*

*Photograph by Steven Nguyen*

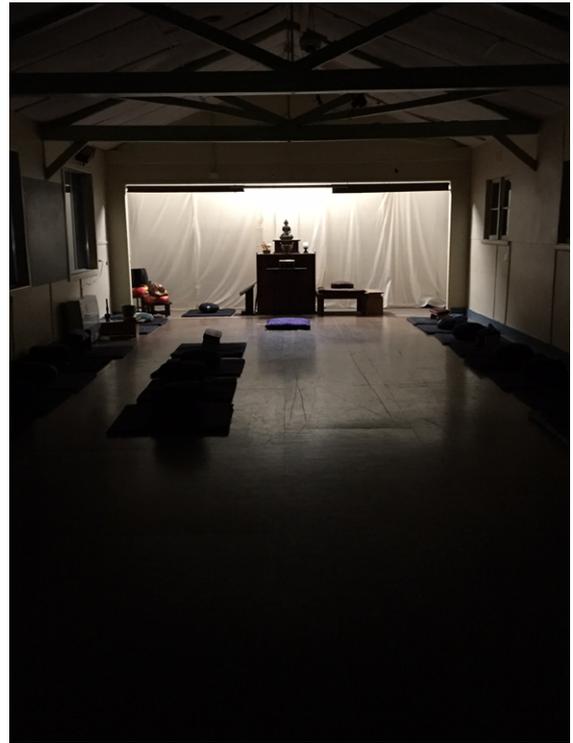
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# TO ADEKATE

—2019

Over a hundred Adekate Teisho afternoons  
The large eucalyptus shades the old green shed  
The gutters and rusty roof full of sticks and dead leaves  
No need to take notes.

George Quinn  
26.11.2020



The Zendo at night



Welcoming people to the Zendo



Enjoying in the dining hall



Sangha Dana

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# IBS CONTRIBUTIONS

## REFLECTION: FIRST YEAR ON THE COMMITTEE

JOHN BOLTON

I started my professional theatre life in Scotland in 1974, performing in the street for children throughout Edinburgh and Glasgow, making community shows and touring the Highlands and Islands. I could see that meetings directly concerned with the creation of theatre were vital, but anything to do with the committee of management, finance, governance or bureaucracy were anathema.

At a meeting of the local committee in Wester Hailles in Edinburgh where we were making a show, I sat, legs crunched under my backside on a hard seat, wriggling around. "Sit Still!" said Laurence Dimarco, the meeting chairman and a community worker. After the meeting he took me aside: "Di' ye no' get it? This isn't just about decisions, and what happens after. It's about getting folks away from the TV, out of the house, communicating."

In 1977 I was sitting for the first time in Master Taizen Deshimaru's Dojo in Paris, legs crossed in front of me, wriggling around. "Sit still!"

All of my experience of the Jikishoan committee has been on Zoom. Every meeting since last September. The atmosphere is quiet, focussed, and fastidious.

Occasionally the wit of Irwin raises a laugh. The President, Shona, is always on top of her brief and leads us surely, lightly, and evenly. All of the office bearers work tirelessly, reporting, serving on subcommittees, racking up long hours of *samu* each year. Ekai Osho is an unseen presence, making points and suggestions, occasionally keeping the meeting moving forward, sometimes asking for clarifications and answering questions. We discuss and make decisions about publications, general business, upcoming meetings, all of the minutiae of an important organization. I listen and look, noticing the level of patience, the ability to ask difficult questions and the desire for all points of view to be heard.

I have been typing up the notes from Committee of Management #282 today for about four and a half hours. It is the first job I have undertaken as a committee member, mentored by Irwin. I've been looking at the notes and listening to the tape of the meeting three nights ago. Much of the work involves deleting, then cutting and pasting from member's reports into the formatted copy of the last meeting. It's very satisfying. The most complex task is

collating the attendance and samu hours of the members and working out the percentages of each person's practice.

They say that we are changed by delight, and there is much that delights me in the life of theatre and the life of the Jikishoan committee. I have known for years that I have an inner labourer and handyman, but it turns out that I also have an inner nerd, someone who is delighted by simple tasks that take time and progress without the anxieties of making art.

It is also challenging. Being in a forum with Office Bearers who work around a thousand hours per year is in itself a challenge: how deep should my relationship with Jikishoan be? How much time and energy is appropriate for me to spend with the organization? This question has exercised me since first joining the community in 2002. Some years I have gone deep and sometimes I've retreated. Each time I advance I am met immediately, accommodated and given tasks, and when I retreat, no one follows me. This is very comforting. Nobody is coerced into staying, nobody is pulled in more fully than they wish to go. It gives me confidence to step in deeper this year and to try to contribute in new ways, with more time and energy.

It is no coincidence that the first year of my time on the committee coincided with the lockdowns of COVID. For many, I know that this has been a time of great anxiety but for me, on many levels, it has been a dream come true. Having nothing much to say artistically leaves me space to learn.

Forty-five years ago, in one of Theatre Workshop Edinburgh's committee meetings, a community worker suggested that we work in fewer communities and make that work more sustained and ongoing. I argued that our commando raids into many communities with exciting shows were more important. I wouldn't argue the same way now. Of course, there is a time for high energy and spontaneity, but not at the expense of finding satisfaction in spending hours on a mundane task to find that it is, after all, very interesting.

*An edited version of a Sunday Sanzen-kai talk, given on 27 September 2021.*

# NUMBERS CLIMBING TO HEAVEN

HELENA DRNOVŠEK ZORKO

My attitude towards numbers is rather ambiguous. Maybe that's why I'm always nervous before my practice meeting with Osho-Sama.

My father was an accountant. He wanted to become an electrician, but in his teens the war sent him to a German concentration camp. Four years in a place where *Arbeit Macht Frei* was forced into people at the ends of pointed guns, of starvation and death, took a heavy toll. He was a nervous and undernourished young man when my mother first saw him. She fell in love because he was different. She quit working when they married, and he got a job as an accountant in the coal mine.

I remember him as a stern man, not easy to please. I had to obey. I was raised not to trust people, because people can do so much harm. I feared the moments when he helped me with my homework or supervised my schoolwork. Exact and attentive to detail, he didn't tolerate mistakes, and only the best grades were permitted. For us, his children, he wanted a brighter future in the new, better society. It took me a long time to realise how kind and gentle he really was.

He sometimes told us about Dachau when I was very young, then he shut down. Much later he started to attend the annual commemorations together with some of his fellow prisoners. It must have helped him to melt the ice;

the trauma that was never healed. I can't remember him ever inviting me to come with him, we were not so close. Frozen in our emotions.

Some years after his death I was at Dachau with my daughter. It was a peaceful and sunny early summer's day. As we walked among the barracks, we could hear children's voices from the nearby schoolground, the sounds of a normal life. I cried. I wished I knew in which barrack he had spent almost four years of his young life. There were so many questions that I couldn't ask.

I remember him sitting in our living room, sheets of paper filled with long columns of numbers spread on the surface of our dining table. His lips moved as he counted numbers to himself, a whisper of a sound. I sat at his feet underneath the table in utter stillness and soaked in the rustling of turning pages. These moments are among my most valued memories of him, of us being together, of the warmth of his presence.

Once, turning the pages of Iwasaki Tsuneo's *Painting Enlightenment*, the painted silkworms on a thread of the Heart Sutra, turned into numbers. Numbers climbing to heaven.

I see us sitting together on a lawn behind the barracks, vowing to save all beings. An ice cube cracks when it's taken from the freezer. I wonder if it hurts.

*Migrating Birds, by Iwasaki Tsuneo*



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# SANGHA NEWS

## TRIBUTE TO SAYADAW

*In Memory of Sayadaw U Nyaneinda (Bhante)*

*Abbot of the Burmese Vihar, Bodh Gaya, Bihar, India*

It was with great sadness that Ekai Osho and the Jikishoan Community learned of Sayadaw U Nyaneinda's passing at 7.26am Wednesday 6 October 2021 aged 86 in Myanmar, Burma.

Last year, Bhante (the Venerable One, a term of deep respect) returned to Myanmar for eye surgery. Owing to the lockdown, he could not return to his beloved Bodh Gaya. He contracted Covid in Myanmar and although he appeared to recover, the virus weakened his lungs.

A large puja and Sangha Dana offering was held in Bodh Gaya on 13 October. Ekai Osho and members of the Jikishoan Community offered dana in gratitude for Bhante's kindness and generosity to the many students who have accompanied Ekai Osho to the Buddhist Studies Program over the years.



# FIRE ON MY BIRTHDAY EVE

EKAI KOREMATSU OSHO

A fire broke out at the back of the Tokozan Zendo, Jikishoan's Home Temple, in the middle of the night on 18 October 2021. The bathroom and change room were completely destroyed and the area around the northside wall of the Zendo Building was severely affected. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

I woke up and saw the blazing fire. I will never forget the fire on my 73rd birthday. My deep appreciation for the fire brigade and the people who came to help put out the fire, particularly, the next-door neighbours who called my wife when they spotted the fire in our back yard.

The cause of the fire is unknown. The fire department suspects it could be associated with an electrical short, caused by damp weather and an accumulation of dust around a power point on the outer wall.

Due to the damage, Zendo activities are suspended indefinitely. The insurance assessor, during a second visit to the site, said that once building work begins it should be completed within three to six months. I am hoping that we will be able to resume regular Zendo activities by the last half of 2022.

## Wake-up Call

*In my deep state of sleep,  
Faintly heard my wife's screaming voice,  
Not a nightmare but a real thing.  
Wake up Ekai, wake up! fire, fire!...*



*Jikishoan Tokozan Temple Fire  
Bathroom, guest storage and utility shed*



*Jikishoan Tokozan Temple Fire  
Ignited powerpoint*

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# Abbot's Activity

Over the last three months, Ekai Osho has continued to lead Jikishoan's online Home Learning and Retreat Programs as well as fulfilling his overseas teaching commitments. The Abbot's activities have included weekly Chosan with retreat and home learning program students, Teisho, Sanzenkai, Dokusan and Main Course A classes. Osho also attended all committee of management, administrative and monastic meetings, providing support and direction for the Community heading into the final months of the practice and teaching year.

In early October, Ekai Osho once again joined the faculty and students of the Carleton-Antioch Buddhist Studies Program to teach the Zen Buddhist studies component of their three-month long course. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the course was relocated from Bodh Gaya, India to Chiang-mai, North Thailand. Ekai Osho joined the students throughout each day via Zoom.

The Thailand program was followed by Jikishoan's five-week online retreat #68 which ran from Sunday 24 October to Sunday 28 November. Eighteen students enrolled full time in the program with others attending casually as they were able. Ekai Osho chose *Sandōkai* by Zen Master Sekito Kisen as the Teisho text. Marisha Jiho Rothman was again appointed as Shuso (Head Student), supported by the Shuso Ryo.

As the year draws to a close Ekai Osho has been working on the IBS hybrid program for 2022. The IBS Outline and Course Application Form have been sent to students and members. Main Course A classes and *Sanzenkai* will commence in late January. The next five-week online retreat #69 will begin on 13 March and culminate in a one-week residential/hybrid retreat from 7-14 April to be held at Casa Pallotti Retreat Centre in Warburton, Victoria.

Ekai Osho closed the teaching and practice year by conducting final year interviews with Main Course C students and by leading 'in-person' Bansan for Sunday *Sanzenkai* at the Australian Shiatsu College in Brunswick and Thursday evening *Sanzenkai* at Quang Minh Temple in Braybrook.

*Osoji* (Temple cleaning) will be held at Tokozaan Temple to mark the end of the year and prepare for New Year celebrations.

*"The starting point is important; it must be clear. Map your course, anchor it, and proceed; then there can be reflection. Your practice will find its credible place. The closing point is also important. Have you completed your course? Close clearly and well, then you can open into the next year"*

*Ekai Osho, Talk, Sanzenkai #1039, 21 November 2021*

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Shuzan Katherine Yeo  
Attendant

21 November 2021

# Committee News

In this last quarter of the year, the committee is both closing business for 2021 and making preparations for 2022.

## **Match the Pledge #6 Building Fundraiser** *Closing 24 December 2021*

This project is about Jikishoan finding a property to purchase—giving space for community practice and providing a stable place for Jikishoan’s practice and growth. It is also about building our community as we work towards this goal. At the time of writing, we have had \$7500 pledged and \$2850 given as donations to match the pledges. The final total will be announced in early January 2022.

## **Retreat**

Earlier this year we were notified that our retreat venue at Adekate, Dean (near Creswick, Victoria) will be undergoing a complete rebuild during 2022 and will not be available to us. So, in November, Ekai Osho and Katherine visited Casa Pallotti in Warburton. They have booked the venue for the April retreat as well as August and November retreats for 2022. This April retreat will be the first residential retreat since November 2019.

## **Sanzenkai – Hybrid practice**

Sunday Sanzenkai is planned to return to the Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick on the 5th and 12th December 2021. Then after the Christmas/New Year will return on the 23rd January. Both Sunday and Thursday night Sanzen-kai will continue in hybrid mode (online and in-person) for the foreseeable future.

## **Tokozan Jikishoan Home Temple**

Please see Ekai Osho’s article for news on Tokozan’s zendo fire, which happened on the 18th October. Insurance assessment is in process at this time and it is estimated that it will be approximately 6 months till the zendo is functioning again.

In our Zen practice we are encouraged to remember to make a good end of things—closure—before beginning something else.

The committee wishes you well in making a good end for 2021 and that your Christmas/New Year gatherings with family and friends bring you much joy and a sense of renewal for 2022.



*With Gassho,*

**Shona Innes**  
*President, 23rd Committee of Management*

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# Soto Kitchen

## BOUNTIFUL LASAGNE

CANDACE SCHREINER

This recipe was first introduced to the Easter Retreat at Casa Pallotti in 2006, and has remained a staple since then. It is usually cooked on the last evening of the retreat—with leftovers (if there are any) for the final day's lunch.

A quote by Zen Master Dogen is in the foreword of the Zen Monastery Cookbook: Recipes and Stories from a Zen Kitchen by Cheri Huber, and it also hangs in their kitchen:

### The Zen Cook

*If we are sincere when cooking,  
even the coarsest food can help us to exhibit  
The seed of Buddhahood.*

*A Chief Cook must love water and rice  
In the same way parents love their children.*

*Once the food has been prepared,  
It must be cared for in the same way.*



### Pasta

Ingredients (serves 4)	Quantity
Parmesan Cheese	3/4 cup, grated
Mozzarella Cheese	3/4 cup, grated
Ricotta or Cottage Cheese	750 g / 500 g
Instant Lasagne Sheets	12

### Sauce

Ingredients	Quantity
Brown Onion (substituted with celery on retreats)	2/3 cup, chopped
Garlic	2 cloves, crushed
Carrots	2 cups, grated
Mushrooms	3 cups, sliced
Passata Sauce	2 x 710 ml
Baby Spinach	2 Cups

### Method

1. In a large skillet at medium heat, sauté the onion in olive oil until translucent. Add mushrooms and cook moderately high until most of the liquid is drawn out and caramelised.
2. Add the carrots, herbs and garlic and cook for 5 minutes stirring intermittently.
3. Add passata and spinach. Heat thoroughly.
4. Preheat oven to 190c. Spread a thin layer of sauce in a large, deep casserole dish or a 9" x18" pan, then layer one-half of the noodles, ricotta cheese, sauce, and grated cheese. Repeat, ending with the cheese. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.
5. Bake covered for 30 minutes and uncovered for 10 to 15 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.

# Calendar of Events

## January – March 2022

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
Sundays	Weekly	5.30 – 8.30pm	Sanzen-kai	Brunswick	Shona
Thursdays	Weekly	6.30 – 9.00pm	Sanzen-kai	Braybrook	Karen/Shona

### JANUARY

Tuesday	18 January	7.00 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #286	Online	President
Thursday	20 January	6.30 – 9.00pm	Sanzen-kai resumes	Braybrook	Karen/Shona
Sunday	23 January	5.30 – 8.30pm	Sanzen-kai resumes	Brunswick	Shona
Sunday	30 January	5.30 – 9.00pm	Bansan (Entering)	Brunswick	President

### FEBRUARY

Thursday	3 February	6.30 – 9.00pm	Bansan (Entering)	Braybrook	Karen/Shona
Tuesday	15 February	7.00 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #287	Online	President

### MARCH

Sunday	6 March	12.00 – 3.00pm	Annual Sangha Picnic	Darebin Parklands	Vice-President
Sunday	13 March – 17 April	5 weeks	Online & Residential Retreat (7 April – 14 April) R#69	Online	Margaret
Tuesday	15 March	7.00 – 9.30pm	Committee Meeting #288	Online	President

### ADDRESSES

**Brunswick**  
Australian Shiatsu College  
103 Evans St  
Brunswick VIC 3056

**Post**  
JZBC Inc.  
PO Box 196,  
West Heidelberg VIC 3081.  
Australia.

**Online**  
jikishoan.org.au  
contact @ jikishoan.org.au

**Publications (Shuppan)**  
publications @ jikishoan.org.au  
webmaster @ jikishoan.org.au

**Myoju**  
Margaret Lynch  
0415 889 605  
Coordinator

### CONTACT

**General Enquiries**  
0421 285 338  
contact @ jikishoan.org.au

**Sunday Sanzen-kai**  
**Zoom Host and**  
**MCB Coordinator**  
Shona Innes – 0421 285 338

**Thursday Sanzen-kai**  
Karen Threlfall  
Co-ordinator(Training)  
0418 342 674

**Online Home Learning/  
Retreat Coordinator**  
Margaret Lynch  
0415 889 605

### 23<sup>RD</sup> COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2021–2022

**Honorary Members:**  
Ekai Korematsu Osho  
Shudo Hannah Forsyth

**President (Tsu)**  
Shona Innes  
0421 285 338

**Vice-President (Kan'in)**  
Marisha Rothman  
0400 873 698

**Finance (Fusu)**  
John Hickey  
0435 939 485

**Secretary (Shoji)**  
Irwin Rothman  
03 9557 7738

**Membership Secretary**  
Marisha Rothman  
0400 873 698

**Ordinary Committee**  
**Members:**  
Katherine Yeo  
0422 407 870

Annie Bolitho  
0407 648 603

John Bolton  
0428 188 220

**Assistant Committee**  
**Members:**

Naomi Richards  
Michael Colton

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**JIKISHOAN** 直証庵  
zen buddhist community

## Teaching Schedule January – March 2022

Teachings are directed by Ekai Korematsu Osho. Please check the website or contact one of the IBS coordinators listed at the bottom of this page.

### SANZEN-KAI

**Sunday Sanzen-kai:** Zendo in person & online  
(5.30 – 8.00pm Sundays)

*Zazen* (sitting meditation), *kinhin* (walking meditation), incense & tea offering, chanting service and Dharma talk (by the teacher or an experienced member). For beginners, members and friends.

Newcomers, please arrive by 5.15pm. Donation—Dana Box.

**Bansan (Entering Ceremony):** 30 January

**Thursday Sanzen-kai:** Zendo in-person & online (6.30 – 9.00pm)

*Zazen* (sitting meditation), *kinhin* (walking meditation), incense & tea offering, chanting service and reading.

**Bansan (Entering Ceremony):** 3 February

**Main Course B1—**5.30 – 8 pm Sundays  
Venue: Australian Shiatsu College & Online  
Semester 1, 2022: 30 January – 26 June  
Bansan (Entering Ceremony) 30 January

**Main Course B2—**6.30 – 9 pm Thursdays  
Venue: Quang Minh Temple, Braybrook & Online  
Semester 1, 2022: 3 February – 30 June  
Bansan (Entering Ceremony) 3 February

*Cost is \$290 per year (2 semesters) or \$200 per semester.*

### MAIN COURSE C - RETREAT STUDY

Three 5-week retreats per year.

**Retreat #69** Home Learning Retreat Online  
13 March - 17 April 2022

Residential Retreat 7 - 14 April 2022

An online and residential Zen retreat experience, including daily zazen and weekly Chosan, Dokusan (interview with the Teacher) and Teisho (formal teaching of a seminal Dharma text).

### INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

**Main Course A1—**Tokozan Zendo & Online  
Ten classes, 10 – 12pm Saturdays  
Term 1: 29 January – 2 April

**Main Course A2—**Tokozan Zendo & Online  
Ten classes, 5 – 7 pm Saturdays  
Term 1: 29 January – 2 April

**Main Course A3—**Online only  
Ten classes, 7 – 9 pm Wednesdays  
Term 1: 2 February – 6 April

*Cost is \$105 Annual Student membership, \$640 per year (4 terms, 40 classes), \$200 per term (10 classes) or \$110 for 5 classes (for returning students).*

*Members by donation for casual classes.*

**ONE DAY WORKSHOP - MC A, B and C**  
13 February

### IBS COORDINATORS

**Online and Residential Retreat and Main Course C:**  
Margaret Lynch: 0415 889 605  
C-course @ jikishoan.org.au

**IBS Student Secretary and Main Course B:**  
Shona Innes: 0421 285 338 / B-course @ jikishoan.org.au

**Main Course A:**  
Katherine Yeo: 0422 407 870 / A-course @ jikishoan.org.au

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