

Soto Mission of Hawaii
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SOTO MISSION OF HAWAII BETSUIN NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2021



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Bon O-Toba Service

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who joined us on YouTube live-stream for the Bon O-Toba Service. We also extend our sincerest appreciation to everyone who made Bon donations to the temple.

For those of you who did not have a chance to view the live-stream, the recorded video is available on our Homepage as well as our YouTube page for about another month. Please take a moment to watch it with your family in honor of your loved ones and ancestors.

To watch the video, please go to www.sotomission.org/bon.



Virtual Bon Dance

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, this year's Bon Dance is canceled. However, Oahu Soto Mission Bon Dance Association will be sharing a virtual Bon Dance on July 31 on our YouTube Channel at <https://bit.ly/36T1Qvk>. The Oahu Soto Mission Bon Dance Association worked hard preparing the event for members of Soto Mission. We hope that you will enjoy it.



Clothing Drive Fundraiser (August 21, 8:30am - 11:30am)

Soto Academy, with assistance from United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), is having a Clothing Drive Fundraiser. UCP will contribute \$0.16 a pound for all clothing donated. This gives Soto Academy the opportunity to help the community and earn money to enhance the school program.

It is requested that you bring your clothing donations on August 21st between the hours of 8:30am to 11:30am bagged in 30 gallon Hefty Strong Multipurpose trash bags with drawstrings. The temple will also have these trash bags available if you do not have them.

We appreciate your efforts to assist Soto Academy in their fundraiser. If there are any questions, please call the temple office at 537-9409. Thank you.

Let's Learn About Soto-Shu: Cooking in Buddhism

In Present-Day Society We Need to Make Eating Our Practice

From the main points of "Tenzo Kyokun (Instructions for the Zen Cook)" and "Fushoku Hanpo (The Dharma of Taking Food)" By Rev. Tatsuzen Sato, Professor of Ikuei Junior College

1. Food has life

Eating is the most basic activity for us in order to sustain our life. As we have a phrase in Japanese "nichijo sahanji (literally meaning the everyday affairs of tea and meals)", we cannot go a day without eating. This is no different for Zen practitioners. Therefore we can find in the Buddhist scriptures the sayings of the Buddha, such as; "All of us sustain our life by eating. We lose our life if we do not eat", or "By eating we maintain our life, increase our strength, make a more healthy appearance, overcome distress and stop hunger and weakening".

Enlightenment does not mean that the Buddha transforms into a special person. The word "Buddha", which means to be awakened, also has the meaning of "becoming aware". He left home to face the fundamental problems of life such as aging, sickness and death. He became aware of the truth of our life. He deeply recognized the fact that all lives in this world inter-relate with each other; they cannot stay in the same state forever, and they are bound to come to an end.

We are inter-related with each other. That is exactly why we should live in peace. That is what the Buddha thought is very important. He emphasized the compassionate mind which manifests as sympathy.

Besides human beings, he also brought a heart of compassion to animals and plants.

2. Buddha's teachings on eating

Now we have a big question here. For us to sustain our own life, we have to put other forms of life such as those of animals and plants into our mouth. That means our life is only possible at the cost of the precious lives of animals and plants.

So the Buddha took a serious view of eating as a matter of how to live. "What we eat" is no doubt an important question, but he also paid the closest attention to "in what way we eat". One of the examples is his teaching on shomyojiki and jamyojiki. Thus he put how to produce food and how to get food in question. Shomyojiki is the food obtained by a right way and is beneficial to maintain the health of mind and body. On the contrary, jamyojiki is the food obtained by doing what we should not do, or by cheating people.

Nowadays we use many kinds of chemicals to enhance the productivity of the land, and raise vegetables and livestock in disregard of season and location. If we keep eating such food for a long time, will it not cause health problems? Since we receive the precious lives of animals and plants as food, we should eat in a way that we can make the very best use of them.

3. Dogen Zenji's teaching on eating

It was Dogen Zenji who further deepened the Buddha's teachings on eating. He wrote Tenzo Kyokun and Fushuku Hanpo and gave concrete and detailed accounts on what the Zen cook, the Tenzo, has to keep in mind, and on what we should be mindful of when we eat.

In Tenzo Kyokun, he wrote about careful consideration, from how to cook food in order to make the most of ingredients, to how to prepare and store the ingredients. In Fushuku Hanpo, needless to say, eating is done with gratefulness, and Dogen Zenji described in detail manners such as the necessity of having the mind and body in good condition and giving attention to the people eating together.

For example in Tenzo Kyokun, as for how to wash the rice, Dogen Zenji advised:

...when examining the rice, first check for sand; when examining the sand sifted from the rice, check for rice...

...when soaking the rice for the midday meal, the cook should not leave the vicinity of the sink. Keep a sharp eye on everything, so as not to waste even a single grain...

We need such care because cooking can lead us to:

fostering a sense of gratitude by deeply recognizing the life source of ingredients.

fostering a sense of empathy by deeply recognizing the lives of the people who are eating.

In Fushuku Hanpo, he wrote about the minute care we should take when eating:

...do not make noise when chewing your food. Do not loudly slurp up your food...

...if you have to remove something from between your teeth, you should cover your mouth...

...do not shake your body, hold your knees, sit crouching over, yawn, or sniffle loudly...

...do not speak while food is in your mouth...



These things to note are aiming at:

- fostering a sense of gratitude by deeply recognizing the life source of ingredients.
- fostering a sense of gratitude by deeply recognizing the lives of the people who cook.
- fostering a sense of empathy by deeply recognizing the lives of the people eating together.

These are just a few examples, but all of them startle us because we now enjoy having food so abundantly that we easily forget to handle it with care, or to have a sense of gratitude.

As the phrase “nichijo sahanji” shows, we repeat cooking and eating everyday, and those activities can become so trivial to us. That is why only a few people pay close attention to the true meaning of preparing meals and eating. However, the activity of eating, which is crucial for living, has a serious meaning – that we receive the lives of animals and plants. Therefore, the attitude of cooking and eating is certainly related to cultivating our mind as well as our body.

4. Joyful Mind, Nurturing Mind, Magnanimous Mind and The Five Contemplations

In Tenzo Kyokun, as a summary of this meaning, Dogen Zenji taught us that it is important to have Joyful Mind, Nurturing Mind and Magnanimous Mind. Joyful Mind is a mind that rejoices at the opportunity of taking such a wonderful position as that of Tenzo. A person who becomes a tenzo should grapple with cooking with Nurturing Mind, which is like parents gently caring for their children. And Magnanimous Mind is the capacity to embrace everything equally.

In Fushuku Hanpo, the verses to recite before eating meals are presented as The Verse of Five Contemplations.

First, we reflect on the effort that brought us this food, and consider how it comes to us.

Second, we reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

Third, we regard greed as the obstacle to freedom of mind.

Fourth, we regard this meal as medicine to sustain our life.

Fifth, for the sake of enlightenment we now receive this food.

The important points for us to keep in mind when we consider eating are all included in these words.

5. How to eat is closely related with how to live

Recently more and more people are interested in the issue of eating. But their focus is mainly on the aspect of nutrition, which perhaps reflects the age of gluttony. Of course nutrition is important, but we must not forget that to eat is to deeply recognize the lives of others. As the Buddha taught, our lives are inter-related with each other.

Now we are facing serious environmental problems on a global scale. Precisely for this reason, we should learn many things from the teachings on how to eat as taught by the Buddha and Dozen Zenji. We eat not only to satisfy our hunger but also to recognize our own life and the lives of others.

Therefore, for us, eating is a practice. I am sure that we can receive many lessons on how to tackle these problems by thinking deeply about how to eat with care every day.

(Article from Sotoshu Shumucho)

Announcements

-Soto Zen Buddhism North America 100th Anniversary

On Nov. 20, 2022, Soto Zen Buddhism North America will be celebrating their centennial anniversary. A little background history, the founder of our temple, Soto Mission of Hawaii, Bishop Hosen Isobe left on a new mission to bring the teachings of Soto Zen to the Japanese Immigrants on the Mainland continent. He subsequently founded Zenshuji Soto Mission in Los Angeles.



We will have a travel plans planed for this event so please hold off on your trip for the year 2022 and think about joining us for this event. More details will be shared later as we receive information from the North America Office.

-Credit Card Recurring Donation

We have been asked if we are able to make recurring donations so that donations can be made every month. We are happy to share with you that we are able to process recurring donation through the use of credit cards. If you are interested in making donations to the temple every month, please give a call and we can set up the donation payments with you.



-Upcoming Events

July 31 Virtual Bon Dance (On YouTube)

-Temple Hour Changes

August 29 Temple closes in observance of 5th Sunday

Acknowledgment of Donations

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their generous donations in June.

Kannon Ko Donations

Arden & Mary Loomis, Ellen Nishimura, Thomas & Chiye Itagaki, Keiko Kawagishi, Bernice Koike, Sally Nozaki, Mona Sawai, Ethel Watanabe, Jean Maekawa, Warren & Karen Motosue, Katherine Higuchi

Memorial Service / Funeral / General Donations

Ronald I. Horiuchi, Dara Luangphiniith, Martin Matsuura, Ryuko Kokuzo, June R. Ikemoto, Ellen M. Nishimura, Katherine Higuchi, George T. Koide, Hawaii Soto-Shu Head Office, The Aikido Ohana, Linda N. Unten, Helen H. Tricas, Joseph T. Kuroda, Diane Nishida, Yaeko Fujiwara, Ichiro Mori, Fuse Family, Sheryl Kahue, Kumiko Naiki, Kauai Soto Zen Temple Zenshuji, Hanayagi Dancing Academy Hawaii Foundation, Annette N. Matsumoto, Jon Nishimura, Roy H. Koizumi, Niles K. Morita, Cheryl Allen, Alvin Honbo



Dharma Lei



Bishop's Office Newsletter

Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office

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Third Quarter, 2021

Issue No. 37

Bishop's Message:

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

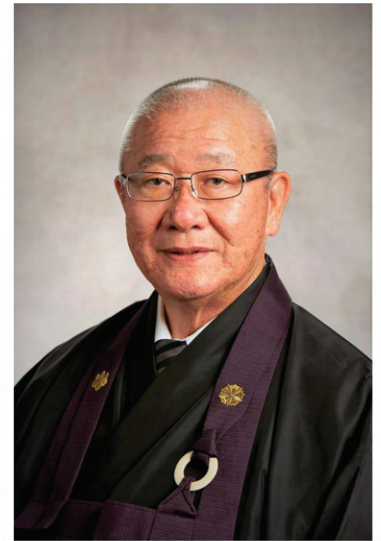
As we enter the months of July and August, our minds, bodies, and spirits have been conditioned through the years to welcome the exciting annual Bon Season here in Hawaii. The sound of music, the sight of all the dancers around the red and white yagura (Bon Dance tower), and the refreshing taste of shave ice—seem like distant memories now. For the second year in a row, we have had to cancel our Bon Dance season because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There have encouraging news that Hawaii is slowly approaching herd immunity, and that restrictions will one day be lifted, and we will be able to return to our normal lifestyle. I am hopeful that we can once again enjoy Bon Dances next year in 2022.

The sadness and frustration I feel for not being able to enjoy the Bon Dance this year is the same type of feeling many people have shared with me regarding so many other activities. Family vacations, graduation parties, birthday parties, and weddings are just some of the activities they have had to postpone or cancel.

I share with people, though, that no matter how depressing these setbacks have been, it is still important that we stay committed to living each day to the fullest. It is true that the pandemic has taken so much from us—from our health to our daily activities. However, it has never taken away our choice to make the best of each day. That decision is left to us.

I am reminded by the wise words of the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, whose poignant words help me through my own struggles to stay positive through these difficult times, and I share them with you to hopefully provide you focus and hope...



***Breathing in, I calm body and mind.
Breathing out, I smile.
Dwelling in the present moment,
I know this is a wonderful moment.***

~The Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh

Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones. I look forward to meeting with you soon.

In Gassho,

Shugen Komagata

Bishop Shugen Komagata



Hilo Taishoji Shinsanshiki and Hossenshiki Report

Aloha,

On May 16, 2021, We had a special ceremony at Taishoji. It is the Shinsankaido and Hossenshiki ceremony. To explain the ceremonies simply, they are Deacon Jigaku and my promotion ceremony. They are a great celebration.

Shinsan means that a new resident minister enters the temple officially. In Soto Zen Buddhism, a new resident minister performs the Shinsan ceremony as a first ritual. For the ceremony, basically, many temple members and ministers gather at the temple to celebrate the new resident minister. But actually, this ceremony is normally held a couple years later after the minister has been ordained as the resident minister, because the resident minister cannot have the ceremony without his disciple. And the Shinsankaido ceremony is part of the Shinsan ceremony.

During the Shinsankaido ceremony, the resident minister shares his knowledge of Buddhism to lead the members to the Buddha's path. I climbed up the altar as the resident minister of Taishoji and prayed for Buddha, Dogen Zenji, Keizan Zenji and world peace and offered incense for them. And I expressed my gratitude for two Taishoji founders, Rev. Mokusen Hioki and Rev. Hakudo Ezawa, and all the past ministers. After that, I prayed for all the family members' prosperity and long continuity of the family line, and offered incense for them. And I expressed my gratitude and offered incense for my dharma teacher, Rev. Gakuyu Hata. He is my father. After that, I answered all the questions related to Zen practice from the attending ministers. This is the main part of the ceremony. I was a little bit nervous, but it was a very meaningful time for me. Before and after the question and answer section, Bishop Shugen Komagata hit a mallet two times. The first announcing mallet signals the start of the questions and answers. The last announcing mallet proves that I provided my knowledge of Buddhism to the attending ministers completely. So this Shinsankaido ceremony is important for me. Next, Hossenshiki ceremony, Hossen means dharma battle. During the ceremony, my disciple, deacon Jigaku Takenouchi, answered all the questions related to Zen practice from the attending ministers instead of me. This style came from the story in which Buddha let Mahākassapa, a disciple of Buddha to share his dharma with all the disciples instead of Buddha. Through this ceremony, Jigaku was tested for his practice of the Dharma and showed his determination.

The reason why we performed the ceremonies is that Jigaku became my disciple to be an official soto zen minister. I mentioned that the Shinsankaido ceremony is an important ceremony for me, but I could not have the ceremony without my disciple. After I got a disciple, Jigaku, I was able to perform the ceremony for the first time. And Jigaku also cannot perform his hossenshiki ceremony without his teacher. In order to become a soto zen minister, he has to find a teacher and have the ceremony with the teacher. Both ceremonies are always held together. So the ceremonies are rare and people hardly get to see them. At Taishoji, I heard that the 10th resident minister of Taishoji, Rev. Aoki performed the ceremonies, but that was about 50 years ago. So you can understand how valuable the ceremonies are.

For deacon Jigaku, it was difficult to perform the ceremony as a soto zen monk, because everything was for the first time. He learned how to wear the robe and behave as a soto zen monk. But he completed the ceremonies successfully. I am proud of him. Actually, I wanted to have the ceremonies last October, but I couldn't do that due to the coronavirus.



And we tried to have the ceremonies on different days several times and tried to have an online ceremony via Zoom, but we couldn't schedule it again and again. However, Jigaku and I didn't give up. Finally, we were able to have the ceremonies this month. The date and program of the ceremonies have changed due to the coronavirus, but it became more special and meaningful as a result. The important thing in our life is to make an effort to achieve our goal without giving up. And to continue the efforts. Things don't always go the way we want them to. There are times we make mistakes. But I believe that if we always continue the effort to achieve the goal which we set, we will achieve good results and make new discoveries which we didn't expect. Finally, my deepest thanks to the Taishoji members, all the Hawaii ministers and deacons who helped with the ceremonies and the HSMA members who support us.

With gratitude, In Gassho,
Shinsho Hata, 15th resident minister of Taishoji Soto Mission

Dear Friends Family and Sangha,

My name is Joseph Takenouchi or Jigaku and I am a deacon at Taishoji Soto Mission of Hawaii on the Big Island. This year through the Shinsanshiki and Hossenshiki ceremony I became a disciple of Reverend Shinsho Hata. The ceremonies, last held over 50 years ago, tie student and teachers together for life. Once bound no other transmission may occur. They are also an important requirement to enter a monastery for formal training. A few years ago, after attending Sunday services I decided that this was a path I would like to walk and began training with Reverend Hata. Through my involvement at Taishoji I began attending Hawaii Soto Mission Association (HSMA) meetings and getting to know the ministers of the other Soto temples in Hawaii. Without them in attendance the ceremonies would not have been possible. Each minister has guided me on this path in one way or another through kind words, speech or actions that represent the Buddha Way. I am also thankful for the encouragement and support received from Bishop Komagata. Due to the extra safety measures in place due to Covid-19 making these ceremonies a possibility was a challenging task, but with the help of everyone we persevered and succeeded in observing them. I am grateful to everyone's dedication and exigent work in making it all a possibility and am truly thankful for their efforts. To better serve our islands and local communities I will be traveling to Japan to undergo formal training at a monastery. My goal is to return with a greater understanding of Buddhism that I can put into practice here in Hawaii. During the Hossenshiki ceremony Reverend Wright asked about my commitment to becoming a Soto Zen minister. My aspiration is that I can help propagate the Dharma within our community and help those seeking to understand the teachings of the Buddha. Everyone has a unique experience in this life. By being an active member in my community I will be able to facilitate understanding of Buddhist teachings in a way that makes sense to the individual. This reminds me of an important Zen teaching Banpo kiitsu. Everything is connected and leads to the experience of oneness. We can only see the world through our eyes and sometimes forget that without each other our own experiences would not be possible. I could only follow this path because of the help and support of Reverend Hata, Bishop Komagata and our Hawaii ministers.



Once in Japan my experience and knowledge will only be possible through the training and practice of my fellow monks at the monastery, and most importantly this path would not be available for me to follow without our Sangha. Banpo kiitsu. We are all connected and are integral to each other. I look forward to returning and serving Hawaii after my training is complete.

In Humblest Gassho,
Jigaku

You can watch the ceremonies from the link below.

Shinsan Kaido (Mountain Seat Hall Opening Ceremony) on May 16, 2021

https://youtu.be/JkFVyzE_mxQ

Shuso Hossen shiki (Dharma Combat Ceremony) on May 16, 2021

<https://youtu.be/F0LaDYVlrjc>



An Introduction to Soto Zen Buddhism

A new 3-month Zoom Dharma series starting in August

Instructor: Rev. Jiko Nakade

Here's a chance to learn the basics of Soto Zen Buddhism by joining the Zoom Dharma Fellowship which is open to all. Please select group 1 or group 2.

Group 1: Tuesdays from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. (Starting August 17)

Group 2: Saturdays from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. (starting August 21)

We will be using the newly published book *The Complete Illustrated Guide to Zen* by Seigaku Amato, a writer, illustrator, and Soto Zen Buddhist priest who is the assistant minister at the Long Beach Buddhist Church. The illustrations are delightful and the text is easy to understand. www.seigakuamato.com

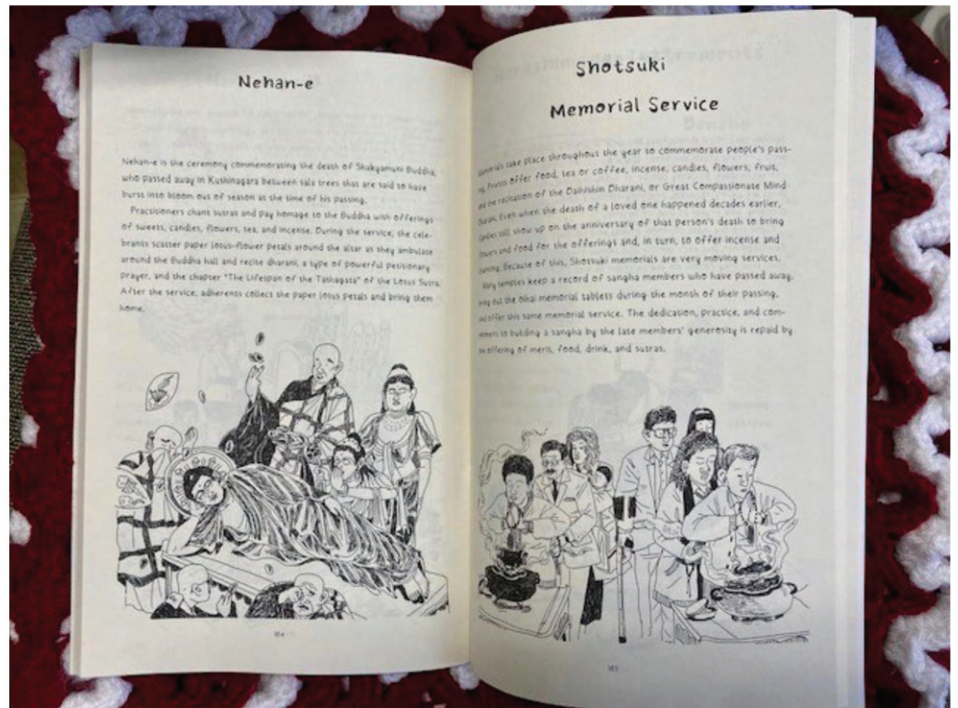
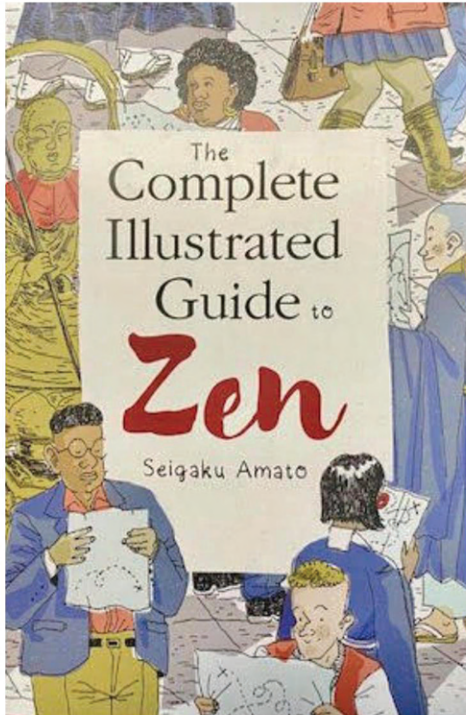
This book is available through the Daifukuji Gift Shop or online at <https://wisdomexperience.org/product/the-complete-illustrated-guide-to-zen/>. Sorry, the Daifukuji Gift Shop is unable to handle mail orders.

Topics to be covered: a brief history of Buddhism, buddhas and bodhisattvas, Soto Zen practice, holidays, ceremonies, sutras, Buddhist vestments, how to set up a home altar.

This series of classes is being offered free of charge. If you would like to offer a donation, you may do so through the temple website: <http://www.daifukuji.org/donation/index.html>. Checks may be mailed to: Daifukuji Soto Mission, P.O. Box 55, Kealakekua, HI 96750.

A Zoom link will be sent to you each week. Learning together via Zoom is a fun way to meet new people and make new Dharma friends.

To register for the series, please contact Rev. Jiko at rev.jiko@daifukuji.org, (808) 322-3524.



Seven kinds of offerings for the non-wealthy

“無財の七施 (Muzai no Shichise)”

Story by Rev. Daito Noda

A person, when he comes back to the serenity of the heart and observes the world about him, will be keenly awakened to the realization, “How I came to be and what I am, is because others around me have sustained my life!” Then, mysteriously, naturally, a feeling will arise to want to do something to serve others.

This is what is called “aspiring to Buddhahood [菩提心 bodaishin] but to my way of thinking, this a precious stage in the progress toward spiritual experience.

However, when one thinks about what one can do, one is filled with all sorts of negative objections: “I don’t have money.” “I don’t have time.” “I’m no good, after all!” One is filled with despair.

But there is a way to serve others, even if you have nothing and nothing left to give. This is called *Seven Kinds of Offerings*. * Even if you don’t have anything, you can perform these offerings.

*from Samyuktaratnapitaka-sutra, p. 30 of *Messages from the Buddha*, (http://www.bdkamerica.org/system/files/pdf/MFTB_Two_pages_on_one-a.pdf)

The first is “offering of eyes.” Any person can touch another person with a friendly gaze. The second is “offering of countenance.” One can, at all times, smile and show friendliness in one’s entire countenance. Third, “oral offering.” One can speak kind words and use kind tones when speaking. Fourth, “spiritual offering.” The kanji characters used for this offering is offering of the heart. In other words, it means to think about putting yourself in the other person’s shoes. Fifth, “physical offering.” The kanji characters used for this offering means to offer your physical person. It appears to mean to offer your physical body through the conduct of your actions. Sixth, “offering of a seat.” It means to give up your seat when on the bus or train. Seven, “offering of shelter.” From long ago, it has meant to offer a night’s stay to travelers. While there are so many ways to serve others, if it were you, what will you do?

These seven kinds of offerings are not all the ways to serve others. Today, for this day, how many ways can you actually do to serve others? Even in things that can’t be settled with money, this is the practice of attaining Buddhahood!



Shall we share the calm and peaceful time together
with **ZAZEN?**

ZenDo Tokyo

Sustainable ZEN Arena -Vol.1-

JULY 23,26,28,30
AUGUST 2,4,6,8,24,25,27,30
SEPTEMBER 3,5

7:00-7:40AM (JST)

Zazen / Dharma talk / Q&A

OPEN ONLY ONLINE / ADMISSION FREE



Please apply from the QR.

*The application deadline is 3days before on each event day.

*Due to an emergency declaration, contents are subject to change

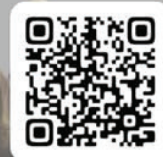
*The number of participants will be limited.

-GUIDING TEACHERS-

Rev. Seigaku Higuchi
Rev. Hojun Szpunar
Rev. Ikki Nambara
Rev. Ryoju Tahara
Rev. Koyu Mori



Live stream on YouTube.



More information