

CloudWater Zendo, the Zen Center of Cleveland

eBulletin #125, May 2018

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Abbot: Ven. Shih Ying-Fa Assistant Abbot: Ven. Shih Ming-Xing

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Introduction to Zen Meditation: Mondays at 7:00 p.m.

Group Zen Meditation: Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.,

Saturday at 8:30 a.m., Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Qigong Class: Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Sundays: Buddhist Services at 10:00 a.m. 3 Sundays Per Month.

5 Elements Practice Group: Selected Sundays at 11:00 a.m.,

For more schedule information go to:

<http://www.cloudwater.org/cal/calendar.pl>.

AFFILIATED SANGHAS

Golden Wisdom Zen Meditation of Canton and Akron (Canton, OH)
Leader: Ven. Shih Zuan-Dao

Peaceful Lotus Sangha (NE Reintegration Center, Cleveland, OH)

Teacher: Ven. Shih Zhong-Xin

Buddha-Heart Fellowship of Penguin, Tasmania, Australia

Teacher: Ven. Shih Jingang

ABBOT YING-FA SPEAKS AT INTERFAITH GATHERING

On Thursday, May 10th, Venerable Shih Ying-Fa joined members of various faith traditions at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Bedford, Ohio as they presented their views of the topic, "Human Suffering and the Existence of God." Participants included members of the Hindu, Christian, Islamic and Sikh traditions. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMC) are Muslims who believe in the Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) of Qadian. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the AMC in 1889 as a revival movement within Islam, emphasizing its essential teachings of peace, love, justice, and sanctity of life. Today, the AMC is the world's largest Islamic community under one Divinely appointed leader, His Holiness the Khalifa of Islam, Mirza Masroor Ahmad (b. 1950). The AMC spans over 200 nations with membership exceeding tens of millions. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA (est. 1920) is America's largest Muslim organization under one leader.



Photo courtesy of Doug McKenzie

SCHEDULE NOTES

- The Zendo will be closed May 26th, 27th and 28th for the Memorial Day Holiday. Group Meditation resumes on Tuesday, May 29th at 7:00 p.m.
- There will be no Qigong class on Saturday, June 2nd.

CHANTING FOR CALMNESS OF MIND AND SPIRIT

On Sunday, April 29th, CloudWater Zendo sponsored a workshop on chanting led by Venerable Shih Ying-fa. The exploration of chanting included a lecture about the aspects of chanting which include listening to both yourself and others, and a demonstration of various kinds of chanting in which all attending participated.

The workshop was part of the Bamboo Grove series emphasizing the relevance of Buddhist principles and practices to daily life.



VENERABLE JINGANG'S BOOK, "A SPARROW SPLASHING" AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE ZENDO

We are pleased to be able to offer for sale the new book by our Dharma brother Venerable Shih Jingang, the teacher at our international affiliate Buddha-Heart Fellowship, located in Tasmania, Australia.



"A Sparrow Splashing" is a journey into the heart of the Buddha's teachings. This book of stories and poetry looks at the life of the author through the eyes of three characters: a child named Little Pebble, a young man called the Seeker, and the Teacher, a Buddhist Monk. The reader is invited to reflect and meditate upon the universal search for happiness and the nature of suffering. Along the way, desire, anger, ignorance, jealousy and pride are encountered in various forms. This book explores Buddhism, and spirituality in general, beyond sectarian dogma, pointing the way to perfect wisdom and compassion, the essential nature of all beings. The book is available at the Zendo for \$16. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go toward the formation of a new Buddha-Heart facility called the BuddhaName Centre.

First ordained as a Rabjung Monk at the age of 6, and with over 45 years of training and practice, Venerable Jingang draws upon teachings from a range of Mahayana lineages. He is a member of the Nien-Fo Ch'an Order of Buddhist Monks and currently works as a hospital and hospice Chaplain. He also spent over 15 years as a volunteer firefighter.

IN OTHER NEWS

- **Congratulations Extended to Alex.** Our good Dharma Friend Alex Chong Do Thompson will soon be ordained as a Lay Minister in the Bright Dawn Center of Oneness Buddhism. After the ceremony, Alex will have a new Dharma name and will be authorized to use the title Sensei. Alex regularly assists with Food Not Bombs, an organization dedicated to helping the hungry, at Market Square Park at 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. You can read his blog, "The Same Old Zen," on Facebook. Please accept nine sincere bows from your friends at CloudWater Zendo in honor of your upcoming ordination.



- **It's Outdoor Zen Walk Season.** Our first walk of 2018 will be held on May 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Pkwy, North Olmsted, OH 44070. We'll meet at the north parking lot adjacent to Shepherd's Hill Lane. Be sure to wear good shoes and dress appropriately for the weather.
- **Animal Memorial Service Coming In June.** Our annual memorial service and blessing will be held on June 24th at 11:00 a.m. at the North Mastick Picnic Area of the Cleveland Metroparks, about 3 miles from the Zendo. It includes the blessing of various categories of animals, the blessing of animals who have been brought to the service, and the release of living creatures into nature to the chanting of the Heart Sutra. All are invited to bring pets to be blessed as well as mementos of departed pet friends, and you are also invited to bring a vegetarian potluck dish to share following the service.

From Ask-A-Monk - Koans

Q: I'd like to know how the koan attains awareness. I know that it is a question that cannot be easily answered using logic. I don't understand the responses that are sometimes given such as, "The bush in the garden."

A: Koans are primarily meant to reduce (and eventually eliminate) our total reliance on the discursive mind. It is incorrect to say that koans are designed to "wipe out" the intellect. This would be foolish, as our intellect is what helps us to function in the Samsaric world.

Koans show us that there are more ways of looking at the world than solely through the lens of intellect. Put simply, the confounding nature of a koan, assuming the koan is practiced diligently, sets up an internal struggle between the way we have traditionally seen things and the way we are now beginning to see things. This mental and spiritual struggle culminates in what is known as the Great Doubt. This is the point at which our traditional view is sharply called into question. If one has realized the Great Doubt, a great sense of determination to "get to the bottom of all this" arises, and the practitioner begins to expend tremendous amounts of energy digging into the true nature of things.

There's no need to be confused or upset if you don't understand an answer to a koan. The same koan can have many answers, as the answer at that moment is the uninhibited, honest expression of the student's understanding right then and there. Example: in the famous koan Zhaozhou's Wu (J. Joshu's Mu), Master Zhaozhou was asked, "Does a dog have Buddha-Nature," to which he replied, "Wu!" or "no!" On a separate occasion, Zhaozhou was asked the same question, to which he replied, "yes!"

The main question is this: what do YOU see? This is all that matters.

If you think you would like to engage in koan practice, I highly recommend seeking an experienced teacher who can guide you. Most people who try koans on their own either give up in frustration or think they have the answer, when in truth it's just their ego-mind deceiving them.

WESAK OBSERVANCE

On May 8th, the Zendo celebrated Wesak, the worldwide commemoration of the Birth, Enlightenment and Parinirvana of the Buddha.

