

# Honolulu Diamond Sangha



Winter, 2017

## *The Story of the Sixth Ancestor*

*by Clark Ratliffe*



The body is a Bodhi tree,  
The mind, a bright mirrored stand.  
Whisk it continuously and zealously,  
Allowing no dust to cling.  
-- Shen-hsiu

The very essence of Bodhi has no tree,  
Nor is there a bright mirrored stand.  
In reality there is nothing,  
So what is there to attract any dust.  
-- Hui-neng

This is Hui-neng's story. It is a wonderful parable and myth that comes down to us through the Ox-head School of Zen approximately fifty to a hundred years after Hui-neng's death in 713. It is set at a time when Zen was still finding its way in China and was composed of many different "schools," most of which were closely aligned with the intelligencia and literati of the time. This legend steps outside the norms of Chinese culture. Hui-neng is depicted as an illiterate bumpkin from the countryside. And yet this uncultured layman had an awakening experience and expressed in a single gatha the fundamental emptiness of all things.<sup>1</sup> It is an extreme exemplar of transmission of the Dharma beyond words and letters. In *The Roaring Stream*, the following old Zen proverb is shared. "The seven hundred eminent monks understood the Dharma; only Hui-neng didn't."<sup>2</sup> Not knowing is deepest.

The two poems above follow on the heels of a talk by Tamen Hung-jen at Huang-mei monastery about 1300 years

ago. Ta-man Hung-jen challenged his sangha to come forth and show their understanding in a poem. The story follows:

On one occasion the Master summoned his disciples together. When they were all assembled he said,

I have something to tell you. Birth and death is a serious matter. All of you, from one day's end to another, are seeking only the field of merits. You are not seeking deliverance from the bitter ocean of birth and death. Each of you must realize the nature of prajna (wisdom) from your own original mind. I want all of you to compose a poem. Bring it to me and if you have awakened to the fundamental essence of the teachings, I will give to you the robe and bowl of the Dharma, and you will become the Sixth Ancestor. Go like wild fire! Do not dally! Mulling over it is useless! A person who realizes his own nature, realizes it as soon as it is mentioned. If you are such an individual, even amidst the whirling swords of battle you will still realize it.<sup>3</sup>

The head monk, Shen Hsiu reflected that, "the other monks are not going to present any poem because I am their instructor. I must compose a poem and present it to the abbot." He had quite a dialogue with himself in trying to come up with the proper poem with the proper attitude. "My attitude should be identical with that of the common man; if I am looking for the succession, it will be evil." After composing the poem he was anxious about presenting it to his teacher. He was in turmoil for days over whether his poem and thus his understanding were adequate. He obviously doubted his own understanding. Finally he decided that he would post it on the wall of the zendo. That way when Ta-man Chan shih happened to see it and should he speak well of it, then he could come forth and reveal that he composed it.<sup>4</sup>

After posting his poem and sneaking back to his room he was unable to sleep for the rest of the night. He was not exactly coming forth in the dharma "like wild fire!" All his education, experience in the zendo and mastery of the methods and rules of practice and leadership of the other monks amounted to nothing in the face of the "whirling swords" of his teacher's "show me!"

When the first transmission from Shakymuni to Mahakashyapa took place, the World-Honored One twirled a flower and Mahakashyapa broke into a broad smile. He didn't ponder and carefully consider his response, he just smiled. What did Sakyamuni twirl? Everything! Where did Mahakashyapa smile? Everywhere! In the next transmission of the Dharma, Mahakashyapa said, "Ananda." "Yes?" was the answer. Clean, simple and

direct. Everything is right there. They didn't know anything about the Dharma and neither did Shakyamuni. "Ananda." "Yes?" No ideas there. No posing of deep profound teaching. Just Mahakashyapa and Ananda being authentically Mahakashyapa and Ananda. And so it went on and on through 28 Indian ancestors and five Chinese ancestors until it was poor Shen-hsiu's turn to step up to the plate. Trembling he took a swing and missed.

The next morning the abbot went with the temple secretary to the wall where he heard that there was a poem posted. The temple secretary was brought along to enter the successor's name on a scroll. The abbot said,

Oh too bad there is no name to enter, for as the sutra says, 'All that has form is empty and vain.' But leave this poem for the people to study and recite. Practice in accordance with this poem prevents one from falling into evil paths; practice like this brings great benefits.<sup>5</sup>

Why did the abbot say "All that has form is empty and vain?" In the Heart Sutra we say that "...form is emptiness and emptiness exactly form." Hsiu's poem is less than half the story. He is saying whisk away the dust to make the mind somehow pure and keep whisking and whisking! Sure, great benefits can come from such a practice, as Ta-man says. But what he doesn't say explicitly is – it goes nowhere! It's a dead end in that it doesn't lead to realization of the Buddha mind. A nice dead end, a helpful dead end, but a blind alley nonetheless.

Later that day the abbot summoned Hsiu to his room and asked if he composed the poem. "Yes, I composed it. I dare not presume to seek the succession but I hope, Venerable Sir, that in your compassion, you will see whether or not this student has a little prajna."

In writing this poem you show that you have not yet realized your original nature. You have only approached the door of the Dharma; you have not yet entered it. The view expressed in this poem does not lead to the boundless awakening you seek!<sup>6</sup>

The abbot told him to go away and do zazen and, when he was ready, compose another poem. If he would be able to show that he had entered the Dharma then he would receive the robe and bowl. Perhaps he also told him that to just wipe away dust is by far not enough. Let go of all those ideas of dust and bright mirrors and see into your true nature where all that dust is no dust at all.

A couple of days later a young man named Ta-chien Hui-neng, who worked in the temple rice-milling room, heard a young monk chanting the poem. Upon hearing it, Hui-

neng knew at once that the writer of this poem had not yet realized his original nature, for although he had not yet received any instruction, he was already aware of who he was and where he stood in the world. He asked the boy who had written the poem. The young monk laughed and said, "Of course a rustic like you wouldn't know! The master has asked that a poem be written showing one's realization and that if anyone has realized the fundamental principle, that one will receive the robe and the Dharma and will become the Sixth Ancestor. The head monk has written this and the Master has said that reciting this poem confers great benefits."

At hearing this, Hui-neng asked to be taken to the zendo, where he had not yet been, so that he could pay his respects to the poem. He asked that the poem be read to him as he couldn't read it himself. After hearing the poem, Hui-neng said, "I also have a poem, and I hope that you would be so kind as to write it for me." The young monk scoffed at this notion and ridiculed Hui-neng as an uneducated know-nothing peasant layperson who was a servant of the temple and unworthy to post a poem. Undeterred, Hui-neng said, "A person of the lowest class may have a superior understanding, whereas a person of the highest class may have only the dead idea of understanding. If you wish to attain the boundless awakening, sir, you must not slight a beginner."<sup>7</sup> Hui-neng comes forth 'like wild fire!' The flame cannot be contained or extinguished. Shamed into it, the monk wrote down Hui-neng's poem.

The very essence of Bodhi has no tree,  
Nor is there a bright mirrored stand.  
In reality there is nothing,  
So what is there to attract any dust.

All the monks could see that this was quite a poem. When the abbot saw the commotion he went over to see what all the fuss was about and read the poem, whereupon he quickly removed it from the wall and said, "This one also has not yet realized his own nature." Everyone took this to be so.

The Record of Transmitting the Light, Case 33:

...Ta-man Hung-jen entered the milling hut and asked Hui-neng, "Is the rice white?"  
Hui-neng said, "Yes, it is white but has still not been sifted.  
The abbot struck the mortar three times with his staff.  
Hui-neng shook the sifter three times.

Verse:

Blows on the mortar – a din carrying beyond the sky;  
Sifted by the clouds – the bright moon of a deep, clear night.

Ta-man Hung-jen, the abbot, gave Hui-neng the robe and bowl in secret so that he wouldn't be accosted, and told Hui-neng to go and hide in the south. When the community found out what had happened, several hundred set out in pursuit of the robe and bowl. They were affronted by this assault on their rank and importance as educated, ordained monks. How could this lowly servant be given the robe and bowl? Scandalous and embarrassing! What loss of face! Among them was a monk named Ch'en Hui-ming, who was formerly a general - a very rough character. Ming was the first to reach Hui-neng.

The Gateless Barrier, Case 23:

...whereupon the 6th ancestor laid the robe and bowl on a rock and said, "This robe represents the Dharma. There should be no fighting over it. You may take it back with you."

Ming tried to lift it up, but it was as immovable as a mountain. Shivering and trembling, he said, "I came for the Dharma, not for the robe. I beg you, lay brother, please open the Way for me."

Hui-neng said, "Don't think good; don't think evil. At this very moment, what is the original face of Ming the monk?"...

Verse:

It can't be described; it can't be pictured.  
It can't be praised enough; stop groping for it.  
The Original Face has nowhere to hide.  
When the world is destroyed, it is not destroyed.

There is a persistent misunderstanding of Zen practice as a process of cutting off thoughts. This misunderstanding keeps coming up again and again. There is the story of the master, Wo-lun who was very pleased with his ability to cut off all thoughts, so much so that he composed the following:

Wo-lun possesses a special aptitude  
He can cut off all thoughts.  
No situation can stir his mind.  
The Bodhi-tree grows daily in him.<sup>8</sup>

Hui-neng got into the fray again and composed the following reply:

Hui-neng has no special aptitude.  
 He does not cut off any thoughts.  
 His mind responds to all situations.  
 In what way can the Bodhi-tree grow?<sup>9</sup>

To stop thinking is not only ultimately impossible, but a terrible idea in the first place. To go beyond this discursive mind is in no way a cutting off of anything. Trying to stop the mind and “wipe away the dust” is a futile attempt to find a point of absolute rest. Seeking absolute truth, goodness and reality is a fool’s errand when it is centered in some relationship of ME and what seems to be NOT ME. In this way the mind finds a way to drive a wedge between the clouds and make it stick. A fantasy! A dream! It was Hui-neng who reminded us that those who cling to the void vilify the Dharma by saying they have no use for words and letters. He pointed out that anyone who says they have no use for words and letters usually has quite a lot to say.

Hui-neng said to those who cling literally to “no setting up of words and letters,”

Even this phrase, ‘no words and letters’ belongs to words and letters. As soon as they see someone expound the Dharma they would immediately jump upon him as one attached to the use of words and letters! You should know that such people are not only deluded in themselves, but are actually disparaging of the Dharma.<sup>10</sup>

We want so much to KNOW! To have certainty and closure is the age old quest. The truth is that ambiguity is no enemy of peace. To the contrary, it is precisely the tension of ambiguity that gives the mind its resilience. Certainty is like a bow pulled so tightly it snaps. The archer cannot fire another arrow. Sure, when a tension is released, great joy and energy may be released in a flood of relief. But eventually, make no mistake about it, at some point the joy goes, the energy dries up, and this constructed house of cards that is our certainty born peace collapses. To KNOW is at once the most enticing and deadliest of all transgressions. That is why it was said that everybody at Ta-man Hung-jen’s monastery understood the Dharma except the sixth ancestor, Hui-neng. Not knowing is deepest.

#### Notes:

1: Foster, N. & Shoemaker, J. (Eds): *The Roaring Stream*, Eco Press, Hopewell NJ, 1996, p. 17.

2: Foster & Shoemaker, p. 17.

3: Fung, Paul F. & Fung, George D. (trs.): *The Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch on the Pristine Orthodox Dharma*, Buddha’s Universal Church, San Francisco, 1964, p. 4.

4: Fung & Fung, p. 5-7.

5: Fung & Fung, p. 7.

6: Fung & Fung, p. 7-8.

7: Price, A.F. & Wong Mou-lam: *The Diamond Sutra and The Sutra of Hui-neng*, Shambhala, Boulder, 1969, II p. 17.

8: Wu, John C.H.: *The Golden Age of Zen*, United Publishing Center, Taipei, 1975, p. 81.

9: Wu, p. 81.

10: Yampolsky, Philip B.: *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, Columbia University Press, NY, 1967, p. 138.



*Hui-Neng’s rice pounder, at the Fifth Ancestor’s Temple. It is reported that the stone parts are original, though it looks like the wooden parts have been replaced.*

## Like an Old Friend

by Susan Brandon

*What follows is adapted from a Dharma Talk given August 14, 2016.*

Here's a poem by Yikui, who lived in the 17th Century.

Once the layered gates are shattered, any place is a place of tranquility,  
Once the mind becomes unattached to things, all things become pure.  
In moments of leisure, I sit upright in the shade of the pine tree,  
Watching as the toad in the moon slowly rises to hover in the east.

When freely speaking the dharma, flowers fall from the sky.  
When one deliberates and debates, one is only confused by things.  
With the right opportunity and good fortune nothing is impossible,  
Knocking on emptiness, extracting the marrow, becomes a way of life.

How wonderfully sublime to discuss mysteries layered like clouds,  
It is truly rare to meet someone who can be called a kindred soul.  
The red stove blazes forth with an extraordinary determination,  
As if it possessed the karmic power to turn the Dharma wheel.

This toiling life disordered and confused by lust, greed, and anger,  
But when the mind-flower suddenly opens, the world becomes spring.  
Melting snow to boil water for tea, I while away the entire day,  
Feeling inside as vast and expansive as the icy-cold moon above.

Yikui, the author of this poem, was a nun and the dharma heir of Sing-gang, also a woman. Yikui is one of many women ancestors from whom only a few poems have survived, although once there may have existed discourse records, *teisho*, and more poems. The name of this poem is "Chan Meditation," from the collection of poems *Daughters of Emptiness*, collected and translated by Beata Grant. (I've translated the first line of the second stanza a little differently than did Prof. Grant. This is possible because she kindly provided us with each poem in Chinese characters as well as in English, and because Michael helped me decipher the characters.)

"Once the layered gates are shattered, any place is a place of tranquility." Shattering the layered gates – or noticing that they have melted away – that's what we're all doing here, isn't it? Is the poem by a man or a woman? No question of that at all! "Once the mind becomes unattached to things, all things become pure."

Speaking freely, flowers fall from the sky. Deliberating, debating is indeed confusing. Haven't you noticed this? How the energy in the room changes during a sangha meeting as the group comes to the sense of what to do. The flowers fall; we can feel their freshness throughout the room. As she says in the later verse, "When the mind flower suddenly opens, the world becomes spring."

Looking at the records and collections of our women ancestors – Yikui and many others – we can feel the how "the red stove blazes forth with an extraordinary determination" in these women, turning the Dharma wheel. At the same time, the idea of "women ancestors" is a dharma gate, an opportunity to see and appreciate something *and* not be caught up in it. A simple description can at the same time be a label, a pitfall or a trap: "women ancestors." Let's not lay that on ourselves – or on them.

The physical vulnerability of being a woman can interfere with what people often seem to want and deserve – power, self-determination, freedom of the body. As Zen students, we know that being female, or being male, being in a human body, can include an overlay of thoughts and feelings -- the layered gates – which are there to be shattered. The exclusion of women in cultures throughout the world, the pervasive misogyny in language and culture throughout Buddhist history, much less human history, and the violence taking place at every moment, somewhere, calls for a response. Practicing, we can see through what's extra. *Then* we can act accordingly.

Our old teachers of the past inspire ALL students of Zen by their determination to practice and realize - to cut through the circumstances, and to experience the luminous original face that isn't male or female, that isn't oppressed and doesn't suffer. The red stove blazing forth is ours. As Yikui says: "Knocking on emptiness, extracting the marrow, becomes a way of life." Thus it is for every Zen student today, in this era. Questioning. Not being satisfied. But "extracting the marrow?" How deep must one go? The marrow isn't down there, to be reached for, is it? (The teacher or leader isn't perfect, either. What a relief!) And practice isn't a matter of being woman or man, lay student or monastic, teacher or newcomer. There's nothing to exclude.

But the details, this and that, so-and-so in the whatever dynasty, living on a mountain or

not, do help us understand each other's circumstances and how it is that each of us comes forth like this. For example, questions about monastic life come up often when we consider our ancestors. We see three lifestyles in traditional Buddhist monastic life – living in community, living as a hermit, and wandering. Chan women monastics were referred to as women sangha, nu seng, and women beggars, bhiksuni, abbreviated to ni. But in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, Emperor Hui Zong officially changed the name of women monastics from nu ni – scavengers - to nu de – women of *virtue* or *power*.

The records of our Chan ancestors show that one might follow more than one of these ways of life at different times. After some years of training, one might go wandering, to visit other teachers or to find one's own way. Some senior students would remain in the monastery, doing leadership for many years out of devotion to their teachers, sometimes leaving after the death of the teacher, or being called upon to succeed her. Others chose the life of a hermit or beggar; the old ladies we see in some koans selling tea or cakes by the side of the road may have been like that.

Once a monk was going to the temple. On the way he met a woman living in a hut.

The monk asked, "Do you have any followers?"

She said, "Yes."

The monk said, "Where are they?"

She said, "The mountains, rivers, and earth, the plants and trees, are all my followers."

The monk asked, "Are you a nun?"

She said, "What do you see me as?"

The monk said, "A lay person."

She said, "You can't be a monk!"

The monk said, "You shouldn't mix up Buddhism."

She said, "I'm not mixing up Buddhism."

The monk said, "Aren't you mixing up Buddhism this way?"

She said, "You're a man, I'm a woman. Where has there ever been any mix up?"

The monk asks the woman who her followers are. He sees that she's a leader! She said, "The mountains, rivers and earth, the plants and trees, are all my followers." She is intimate with each plant and tree. We often speak of "the mountains, rivers and earth, the plants and trees" as *our* teachers – *they confirm us*. Who is the teacher and who is the follower here? This woman isn't fooled about that.

She's so clear about who she is, isn't she? The monk asked: "Are you a nun?" "What do you see me as?" she

replied. What a skillful question this is! He said, "A lay person" (in other words, you're not a nun). She said, "You can't be a monk!" He was a bit mixed up, so he said, "Aren't you mixing up Buddhism this way?" Her clarity invited him to get right to it! Not only our teachers do this, we all can and do. *Your* clarity inspires the person *you* engage with to come forth more clearly.

The voice and the perspective of every woman is particular to herself, and at the same time is universal, just as it is for each man. Many Zen students feel a strong need to recognize our women ancestors, not only because they find it fulfilling to hear women's voices now that scholars have discovered these writings, but also because these voices seem to speak especially to the suffering we hear about or feel every day in our imperfect world. Suffering is the condition and the medicine.

At times it's not easy to recognize the suffering of all people, as comparable to people in my own group. Being male or being female is primal - because it's your own body! There's nothing to argue about. No philosophy here. Even when we do have opinions about the condition of being a man or a woman, when we stay in the body, we can go beyond our ideas and our birth and death. Everyone suffers, and we're all looking for a way through it. *This* is what Shakyamuni left home to investigate. How to do that? I do it by suffering and practicing as a woman – this woman! 5'6", graying hair, can't see so well at night anymore. Just like that.

How about *this* poem as our evening message at sesshin sometime?

I urge those of you who aspire to enlightenment —  
In aspiring to enlightenment you must be diligent!  
If your mind is not completely sincere,  
You will wallow forever in the bitter sea!

The great earth is vast and without limit,  
And sentient beings are too many to count.  
Yet how many people are there with the sense  
To leap out of the bitterness of samsara?

The verse is by Jizing, a wandering monastic – a bag lady, from earlier in the Ming dynasty than Yikui Roshi. Jizing seemed crazy to some people. She has tasted the bitter sea, and she's able to not be *confined* to the bitter sea. Do you have the sense to leap out of the bitterness of causes and conditions, the bitterness of the world of the zero-sum game, the bitterness of politics and justice, the bitterness of the pain of what human beings are doing to each other as we speak, much less what has happened in the past? It seems like a very tall order, yet absolutely necessary.

Zizing teaches how to leap out of the bitterness of birth and death – she tells us: be diligent! Practice diligently, with a completely sincere mind.

Our lineage chant includes Single-Mind Aitken, honored one. This is Anne Hopkins Aitken, the co-founder of the Diamond Sangha. She attended her first sesshin in Japan almost literally on her honeymoon and never looked back – but her life was her own practice, *her* two feet on the path, no one else's. Without *her* diligence and her sincere devotion to her practice, you wouldn't be reading this, literally.

She built our sangha using her every resource, not holding back: being present, using her talent and teaching experience to listen and care for people, giving of her financial inheritance for land and buildings, making a home for Roshi and countless others: being the way she happened to be. What is always said about Anne is how personally generous she was in encouraging everyone in their practice. The women who have written or spoken of her said they felt that she especially encouraged the young women, and at the same time, young men reported how personally encouraged and supported they felt. So it doesn't have to be a *woman* thing.

At the Maui Zendo, years ago, practicing with Anne and Roshi, a group of women published a literary journal called *Kahawai, a journal of women and Zen*. *Kahawai* is the Hawaiian word for “stream,” and the publication was subtitled the “little stream that moves boulders and uproots trees.” Thomas Cleary, who translated the Blue Cliff Record, and many other Zen texts, translated and gave the journal twenty-three previously unpublished records of our ancestors who are women. They were published, with comments by Aitken Roshi, in two issues in 1980.

The woman living in the hut is from this collection. Names for these women include the tiger, the bathhouse keeper, the donut maker; there's a geisha and a station lady. One koan is called “the overpowering woman.” There are younger women and girls, bright and lively, laywomen married to diplomats who travel, and women living in wealthy families. Likewise, in the collection of poems being sampled here, some women began to practice as teenagers, some were able to practice intensively at home, while others went to the monastery after they completed their responsibilities - raising children or caring for their parents. Does this sound familiar? Our lives as women and men share this common thread – no matter how much we may be alert for dharma gates throughout the day, probably most of us, each of us, would welcome more time to do zazen. Each of us strives to sincerely practice within the circumstances of our own family life. Who is an ancestor? Who is a descendent?

We're only just touching the surface here of Professor Grant's collection of Chinese poems and what we call the Kahawai Koans. There is much, much more to appreciate and discover in just these two collections. Here is Fahan, a Kahawai woman who was a Dharma heir of Dahui Zonggao (whom we remember in our ancestor dedication and whom we know to have had women as dharma heirs), to have the last word.

Since Fahan was widowed, she never used ornaments or makeup, and always ate vegetarian food, not eating after noon. Once the Chan Master Dahui sent a Chan adept to call on her son, Mr. Wei. Mr. Wei put him up for a while, and the adept talked to him about Chan.

One day the widow asked the adept about Dahui's method. He replied, "The master usually just has people observe the saying 'A dog has no (Mu) Buddha nature' and the saying about the bamboo rod. He simply does not allow them to make comments or to think about them; he does not permit understanding (at the bringing up of the saying) at the mere mention of it. 'Does a dog have the Buddha nature or not? -- MU! -- he just makes people look at it just like this.'"

Fahan subsequently sat at night diligently investigating the saying. Suddenly one day her mind became clear, without any sticking points. The Chan adept then left, and Fahan sent a letter with him back to Dahui, telling of her entry into the Way, including several verses. The final verse read:

All day long reading the words of the sutras,  
It's like meeting an old acquaintance;  
Don't say doubts arise again and again—  
Each time it is brought up, each time it's new.

Dahui was delighted; unconsciously she had accorded with Dahui's saying that once one has mastered Chan, reading the scriptures is like going outside and running into an old friend.

It's funny how some books or texts seem fresh and new each time, even after many re-readings. And how we never run out of things to talk about with certain friends. Speaking or silent, it's just a delight to be together, walking, hiking, cooking, cleaning up. And with some people, one immediately starts talking like old friends, and might not slow down for many years if at all. Time together today is as fresh as flowers falling. What is that fresh, pure breeze, the endless spring of bubbling water? Is it different from our moments of diligent investigation? Is it different from writing a poem? Chopping a carrot? Sweeping with the broom?

### **The Honolulu Diamond Sangha is seeking a Half-Time Administrator**

Our half-time administrator position will be open as of July 1, 2017 or sooner. This employee position is for an experienced Zen student with a well-established practice, preferably with this sangha or a Diamond Sangha affiliate.

Our administrator maintains the financial books and records of the Honolulu Diamond Sangha, keeps the membership records, serves as sesshin coordinator, and is the corporate secretary and an ex-officio member of our Board of Directors.

The administrator is an important part of our communication among and within the sangha and between the Board and the community in person, in writing, on the web, and by leading production of the newsletter and sangha mailings. Applications will be considered as received.

For further information about either opportunity, please call or write to Susan at (808) 735-1347, or [info@diamondsangha.org](mailto:info@diamondsangha.org).

### **Looking for a Temple Keeper for the Pālolo Zen Center**

We'll be looking for a new temple keeper to begin later this year. This is a training position for an experienced Zen student with a well-established practice. Preference will be given to applicants from Diamond Sangha centers or in an active teacher/student relationship with a DS teacher. We request a one-year commitment.

The temple keeper leads our small residential program of people who work or go to school while doing daily and weekly Zazen and samu together and with the sangha.

The temple keeper coordinates sangha work practice and related programs, and keeps the sangha and our Board of Directors advised of our facility's care and maintenance needs, so that together we can maintain the grounds and keep the aging buildings in good repair. We provide a room with private bath, waiver of sesshin fees, with modest monthly stipend. Depending on the situation, a part-time job in the community may be possible.

To apply, please closely review the description of our residential program in our website, download and complete the residential application form, and submit it with a cover letter describing your qualifications.





## Rohatsu Sesshin 2017



## Diamond Sangha Teachers' Circle Meetings, Oct. 3-7, 2016



## Highlights from the Calendar

We gather for Zazen most Sundays from 9 to 11 am, and most Wednesdays from 7 to 9 pm, followed by tea. Variations on that schedule, and special events, are highlighted below. Please see, or download, our full calendar from our website, [diamondsangha.org](http://diamondsangha.org), call us at (808) 735-1347, email to [info@diamondsangha.org](mailto:info@diamondsangha.org), or find us on Facebook.

### February

2/11, Saturday: Orientation to Zen Practice, 9 am to noon. No preregistration is necessary and there is no fee.

2/12, Sunday: Deadline for registration for 5-day Spring Sesshin (March 24-29, 2017).

**2/15, Wednesday: NEW! Beginner's Mind Forum. A time for informal discussion and questions about practice, from 6 to 6:45 pm, before our regular zazen program at 7:00. Not just for newcomers, all are welcome.**

2/17, Friday: Board of Directors meeting, 6:30

2/19, Sunday: Work Party (dharma assembly and informal work practice), 9 am to noon followed by lunch.

2/22, Wednesday: Zazen/Dokusan with Question and Response time, 7 to 9 pm followed by tea.

2/26, Sunday: **Hiking Zazenkai**, 9 am to 5 pm, trail to be announced. We will meet at the trailhead. Bring a brown-bag lunch, water, sunscreen, headgear and sturdy shoes.

### March

3/11, Saturday: Orientation to Zen Practice, 9 am to noon. No preregistration is necessary and there is no fee.

3/15, Wednesday: **NEW! Beginner's Mind Forum.** A time for informal discussion and questions about practice, from 6 to 6:45 pm, before our regular Wednesday zazen program at 7:00. Not just for newcomers, all are welcome.

3/15, Wednesday: Zazen/Dokusan with Question and Response time, 7 to 9 pm followed by tea.

3/17, Friday: Board of Directors meeting, 6:30 pm.

3/19, Sunday: Samu (zazen and silent work practice), 9 am to noon followed by lunch.

3/19, Wednesday: Deadline for registration for our 5 day Hele Malie ("Peaceful Walking") backpacking sesshin (May 15 – 20, 2017).

3/20-23, Mon-Thurs: **NEW! Evening zazen** during the week leading up to sesshin. In addition to our regular Wednesday evening program, we will sit together on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 7-9 pm. Friday is the gathering day for our Spring Sesshin.

3/24 – 3/29: **Spring Sesshin.** The temple will be closed from Saturday, 3/25 through Wednesday, 3/29 for our 5 day Zen sesshin (full-time overnight silent "retreat"). All are welcome to attend the Dharma Assembly with presentation by the teacher at 2 pm on Saturday through Tuesday. Please arrive a few minutes early and wait to be escorted into the zendo. Maintain quiet, please, and remain on the lanai; you may use the restrooms during kinhin just before the assembly.

### April

4/8, Saturday: Orientation to Zen Practice, 9 am to noon. No preregistration is necessary and there is no fee.

4/9, Sunday: **Hanamatsuri** -- in Japanese, "flower festival" to celebrate the birth of the baby Buddha, 9 am to about 11:30. Children are especially welcome. Zazen, stories, offering and dedication, tea and festive refreshments.

4/9, Sunday: **Annual Sangha Meeting** starting at about 11:45, following Hanamatsuri festivities.

4/12, Wednesday: Zazen/Dokusan with Question and Response time, 7 to 9 pm followed by tea.

4/16, Sunday: **Zazenkai (all-day sitting)**, 8:30 am to 4:00 pm followed by tea. Bring a brown-bag lunch for the

11:30 – 12:30 lunch period. There will be a dharma talk at 1:00 pm. All are welcome for all or part of the day.

4/19, Wednesday: **NEW! Beginner's Mind Forum.** A time for informal discussion and questions about practice, from 6 to 6:45 pm, before our regular Wednesday zazen program at 7:00.

4/21, Friday: Board of Directors meeting, 6:30 pm

4/23, Sunday: Work Party (dharma assembly and informal work practice), 9 am to noon followed by lunch.

4/28 through 5/6: Vipassana Hawaii Retreat. The temple will be closed all week, and the HDS program on 4/30 will be held offsite (to be announced). Please contact vipassanahawaii.org for registration or retreat information.

4/30, Sunday: Sangha Circle (discussion on a topic to be decided by the sangha), 10 am to noon, at a location to be announced (not at PZC).

## May, 2017

5/1 through 5/6: Vipassana Hawaii Retreat. The temple will be closed all week, and no Honolulu Diamond Sangha program will be held Wednesday 5/3. Please contact vipassanahawaii.org for registration or retreat information.

5/13, Saturday: Orientation to Zen Practice, 9 am to noon. No preregistration is necessary and there is no fee.

5/14, Monday: Deadline for registration for our 7-day Summer Sesshin (June 30 - July 7, 2017).

5/15-20: **Hele Malie Sesshin** (not at Palolo Zen Center). Hele Malie means "peaceful walking." Participants experience backcountry hiking with zazen and sesshin forms arising from the circumstances of traveling and camping together.

5/17, Wednesday: **NEW! Beginner's Mind Forum.** A time for informal discussion and questions about practice, from 6 to 6:45 pm, before our regular Wednesday zazen program at 7:00. Not just for newcomers, all are welcome.

5/21, Sunday: Samu (zazen and silent work practice), 9 am to noon followed by lunch.

5/26, Friday: Board of Directors meeting, 6:30 pm.

5/31, Wednesday: Zazen/Dokusan with Question and Response time, 7 to 9 pm followed by tea.

*This beautiful new dokusan bell, with a bright, clear tone, was custom made for us by a foundry in Maine*



## 2017 Intensive Practice Period June 4 to July 19

Our annual Intensive Practice Period is an opportunity for intensive practice for both local residents and members of our residential community. If you live away from Oahu, this is a good time to visit.

Our residential practice program considers applications from Zen students for stays of two months or more. The IPP includes a 7-day sesshin from July 1st to 7th.

More information, and applications for our residential program and the sesshin are on our website. Please call with any questions (our contact information is below).

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