



What we did at Olympia Zen Center in Year 2020

As Olympia Zen Center complied with all the precautions outlined by Governor Inslee and his Taskforce regarding assemblies due to Covid-19, we had almost no in-person gatherings in 2020. We have met and practiced regularly online, but we look forward to when we can again see one another in person.

Regular and Ongoing Practice

- Continued morning and evening Zazen schedule and monthly day-long Sesshin online.
- Offered annual week-long Rohatsu Sesshin in December, online and for limited in-house practice.
- Held regular monthly Board meetings online with thanks to President Eva Neske, Officers Mickey Olson for Minutes of Meetings and Bob Witzl for Treasurer's reports.
- Continued Wednesday evening study online using *A Blueprint of Enlightenment, Dogen's Gakudo Yojinshu, A Commentary* by Gien Inoue with translation by Daigaku Rummé and Keiko Ohmae.
- Maintained OlympiaZenCenter.org website (Brad Gibson & Eidosan), Facebook page (Eva Neske), newsletter of current events and publishing practitioners' writings on Dharma (Allyson Jozen Essen), and postings of Dharma talks and discussions on Youtube.com (Brad Gibson).

House and Outdoor Projects

- Continued care of the pasture on the north side of the property removing invasive yellow archangel and also on the west side as it approaches the wetlands.
- Attended to tree trimming, removing dangerous limbs and trees, thinning brush in the woods.
- Tested septic system quarterly.
- Maintained the beauty of the grounds with assistance of numerous volunteers for weeding and raking.

Special Projects and Events

- Hosted online Visiting Teacher Konjin Gaelyn Godwin Sensei, first woman Director of Soto Zen International Center who spoke on Dogen Zenji's teaching on "Turning." She is also Abbot of Houston Zen Center in Texas.
- Hosted online Visiting Teacher Professor Donovan Johnson, author of *Turning to the Other, Martin Buber's Call to Dialogue in I and Thou*, published by Wipf & Stock. Professor Johnson is retired faculty having taught world religions and global humanities in California and Washington.
- Hosted online Visiting Teacher Kandō Inoue Rōshi, Abbot of Shōrinji in Shizuoka, Japan. Kandō Rōshi wrote the Introduction to *A Blueprint of Enlightenment* and is the youngest son of Gien Inoue Rōshi, author. Kandō Rōshi regularly teaches *Shōbōgenzō* at numerous temples around Japan.
- Blake Lindskog, brother-in-law to Steve Senna who is a board member and our safety leader, built a new wall altar for our statue of Ryokan, whom we honor in our Order of Ryokan. With deepest gratitude to Blake, we now place the statue in a more honorary position at our entrance.
- We established a Safety Council to insure proper conformance with the Governor Inslee's requirements for public and private assembly. Steve Senna, an EMT expert, headed up the committee which included Bill Conover, Karin Van Vlack, and Allyson Jozen Essen.
- We celebrated Jukai Ceremony for Bill Conover on November 22, 2020.
- Hosted annual New Year potluck gathering to ring in the New Year 2020.
- Celebrated Ryokan's life with the annual poetry night in January.

- Celebrated various ceremonies on the liturgical calendar: Buddha's Birthday, Buddha's Enlightenment, Buddha's Parinirvana, Mahapajapati Day, various Bodhisattva Ceremonies, 49th Day Memorials.
- Held Annual Meeting in January to meet legal 501(c)3 requirements of the State of WA.
- Held ceremony to place the ashes of Richard Mendenhall near the columbarium. Dick was a long-time practitioner, supporter, and friend of Olympia Zen Center who died Feb. 18, 2017 in Lacey, WA.
- Assisted Calvin Malone for six months in residence in his successful reentry to civilian life.

Other Noteworthy Activities

- All bills and mortgage payments were paid in full and on time with gratitude to the faithful work of our sangha and our generous donors, with particular gratitude to the work of our treasurer Bob Witzl and his assistant Allyson Jozen Essen.

Eido san's Activities

- Led morning and evening gatherings, monthly one-day, and Rohatsu Sesshin.
- Temple Ground Press published *A Blueprint of Enlightenment, A Contemporary Commentary on Dogen Zenji's Gakudo Yojinshu, Guidelines for Studying the Way* by Gien Inoue. Translated by Daigaku Rumme and Keiko Ohmae. The book contains a biography of Gien Roshi and an Introduction by Kando Inoue Roshi, one of Gien Roshi's sons. It was published in August 2020.
- Attended an online meeting of the Roadmap Committee of the Association of Soto Zen Buddhists at Zenshuji in Los Angeles. The Roadmap Committee is responsible for planning the transition to America's increasing responsibility for training and certification of Soto Zen priests and for its transition to certificated priest training at the newly built Tenpyozan at Lower Clear Lake, CA, administered by Akiba Gengo Roshi, No. America bishop.
- Performed a funeral in Palo Alto, CA for John Sullivan, friend, and former active member in practice at Kannon-do Temple in Mountain View, CA, and former public defender for 30 years in Palo Alto.
- Taught a four-week Shodo/Calligraphy class for beginners using traditional techniques of the brush.
- Attended an online bi-annual conference of the Soto Zen Buddhist Association with Allyson Jozen Essen. The emphasis was on Anti-Racism, Equality, Patriarchy.
- Held for four Sunday afternoons, Awakening Creativity Workshops in the garden offering encouragement to anyone to relieve the tensions related to the national political environment.

Maybe Plans for 2021

- Olympia Zen Center might (depending on our ability to gather) celebrate our 20th Anniversary of practice at Ryoko-an. Plans for the celebration will be carried over with the main event to be scheduled in summer. We'll hold Full Moon Sesshin in July, once we can gather.
- Ongoing training and encouragement for Sangha to move into leadership practice positions.
- Continue to care for practice, land, Columbarium, and gardens of Ryoko-an and Gogo-an.
- Continue to offer Precepts study and support for several people preparing for Jukai.
- Planning a public event Open House and Art Exhibition through South Sound Open Studio to feature the paintings of Allyson Jozen Essen and Eidosan, if it will be rescheduled.
- Eido san attending Association of Soto Zen Buddhists meeting at Zenshuji in Los Angeles. Maybe.
- We will especially continue our Wed. evening discussion group for conversation and study of selected Buddhist texts. As mentioned above, we are reading *A Blueprint of Enlightenment* by Gien Inoue Rōshi.

