



## SHASTA ABBEY

A MONASTERY OF THE ORDER OF BUDDHIST CONTEMPLATIVES  
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Dear Friends,

This year has been both fruitful and challenging and we want to thank you for all the help and support that you have offered to us. We have been able to increase the extent of our in-person retreats and discussions while continuing our on-line Dharma offerings. We are especially grateful to the many lay trainees who have been in residence with us. Their practicing together with us and their assistance in our day-to-day activities has been invaluable.



*Our Main Altar for Enlightenment Day*

In February, we reluctantly bid farewell to our long-time sister-monk and Bursar, Rev. Serena Seidner, who moved to the Bay Area for health reasons. On September 21st we marked the 50th ordination anniversary of Rev. Master Shikō Rom, who was ordained in 1973 by Rev. Master Jiyu. We are grateful for her many years of training and appreciated a Dharma talk she offered on “Faith and Perseverance.” We welcomed two new postulants into the monastic community: Nancine McDonald, on November 29th, and Trinity Treat on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

We sadly held two funerals, the first one on July 1st for our beloved and most senior monk Rev. Master Jisho Perry, who died May 3rd after a long illness. Many friends, family and congregation members came to pay their respects and express their gratitude for his life and teaching. In October, we held a funeral for Rev. Zuiko Hill Swann, a former monk and teacher at our Kannon Dell school. Our visitors this year included twenty nuns and ten lay trainees from Duc Vien Temple in San Jose, who came for a day in March, and in July the Abbot and several members of the Dharma Rain Temple in Portland, Oregon. Also in July, we welcomed three monks – Ven. Chang Qi, Yan Jian and Yan Tsing - from Dharma Drum Mountain Monastery in Taiwan who came for a month-long stay. Their visit was much enjoyed by everyone. Rev. Jisen Coghlan, of the Boise Zen Center, came to join us for the August retreat, and Rev. Shuji Mintzmeyer, who leads Sōtō Zen Buddhist groups in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Manhattan, Kansas, joined us for our Segaki retreat.

Our retreats generally were a combination of in-person and on-line. Our first one, in March, led by Rev. Masters Oswin and Kodo, explored *The Scripture of the Buddha's Last Teachings*. Our annual Jukai, in May, offered the Precepts to nine lay trainees for their formally becoming Buddhists. Our three main summer retreats included, in June, *Teachings on the Pali Canon* by Rev. Master Daishin; in July, *Exploring Monastic Life*, led by Rev. Masters Daishin, Kodo and Enya, and Rev. Allard; and *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, with Rev. Master Meian, in August. Dharma talks from these retreats can be found on the Abbey's website. In October, the community offered its annual Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts retreat and welcomed over 25 lay retreatants; the retreat was also offered online.

In late September, Rev. Masters Meian, Daishin, and Astor, and Reverends Valora, Trahearn, and Vera traveled to Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey for the two-week Order gathering. Those of us staying here joined in on Zoom meetings along with other monks from the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands, Latvia, Germany and the U.K. We are grateful to those members of our congregation who came to help out here at the Abbey during those weeks.

The Smith River Complex wildfire reached our Fugen Forest Hermitage in late August, necessitating evacuation. Thankfully, most structures escaped damage, and only some infrastructure needed to be replaced. Here at the Abbey, and at Compassionate Friend Hermitage, we continue our fire prevention measures. We welcomed the delivery in October of a new Kubota tractor which replaces our John Deere tractor ("the Green Machine"), which has served us faithfully for many years, even though the demands on it well exceeded its capacity. In November, the Vimalakirti Hall (Guest House) closed for a month to allow the installation of a new heating system. FOSA (Friends of Shasta Abbey) continues to manage the Buddhist Supplies Shop and organize work days for our congregation to assist us in grounds maintenance; other FOSA projects have included financial assistance with the new heating system and tractor purchase.

As the year closed, we celebrated our annual New Year's retreat with the ringing of the Temple's Great Bell and a Dharma talk by Rev. Master Meian.

At this time, we especially want to express our gratitude for your continued financial and practical support of our monastic community as we try to continue the Dharma legacy of Rev. Master Jiyu. She was born on 24th January, 1924, a hundred years ago, and established Shasta Abbey in 1970, over fifty years ago. It is our great privilege to be here and we are grateful for the opportunity to follow in her footsteps and offer the Dharma teaching to so many of you. May your practice of the Buddhadharma continue to guide your footsteps along the Path, and may you and your family and friends have peace and joy in our New Year.

With gratitude and all good wishes,



Rev. Meian Elbert  
Abbess.