



Rocky Mountain Zen Newsletter

January 2024
Volume 2, Issue 1

Our Year in Review

Dear Dharma Family of Rocky Mountain Zen,

2023 was full of surprises as we welcomed 5 more friends for a jukai precept ceremony. Starting off with the weekend Zazen-kai at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden in February, Reigetsu/Kathy and Hōryū/Sean led the online activities consistently. With Melissa stepping up for jukai, we witnessed Marlin, Nathan, Margaret and Marianne joining her to receive the precepts to formally become Buddhist students.

Here are the names of our beloved Dharma family members:

Aaron - Senyu 仙友 **Ryūgen** 瀏源 eternal friend, unclouded source. He was given a mission to seek what that means.

Kathy - Soshitsu 祖室 **Reigetsu** 伶月, ancestors' chamber/essential teachings, moon of wisdom and compassion.

Sean—Heki-lei 碧靈 which is a spiritual stone in China of auspicious blueish green, and **Hōryū** 法隆, flourishing of dharma.

Randall—Reishin 靈森 meaning 'spiritual forest', **Sogaku** 祖覺 Ancestors' Awakening.

Melissa—Kanrei 觀靈, perceiving the elusive, **Lin-ne** 輪慧, wisdom that sees beyond the cycle of life.

Marlin—Kakugen 覺眼, Awakening Eye, **Yūryū** 宥龍 taming celestial dragons.

Nathan—Reiō 靈応 subtly and elusive response, and **Jinshū** 仁衆 boundless love of brotherhood for all beings.

Margaret - Sensui 仙水 eternal stream of water in the Nikka Yuko, and **Leiyū**, wise and compassionate excellence that has arisen from hardship.

Marianne - 靈淵 deep water of spiritual abundance and **Sōrin** 想凜 extending thoughts and prayers firmly and independently standing on her two feet

Precepts that you receive with your dharma names are there to guide us back to our true elements.

This year, it was lovely to see all our families and friends including Lauri-Ann in Magrath, Ann/Trudy in Lethbridge, and meet Nindo Trudy in Edmonton, Asami from Lethbridge and Deborah from New Brunswick to welcome them as our new RMZ friends.

I would also like to extend our special thanks to our friends share generously share their presence with us on Zoom; Randall/Sogaku 祖覺 from Tennessee, Michel Mokusho 默照 from Quebec, Amber from Edmonton and Bill from Long Beach, California.

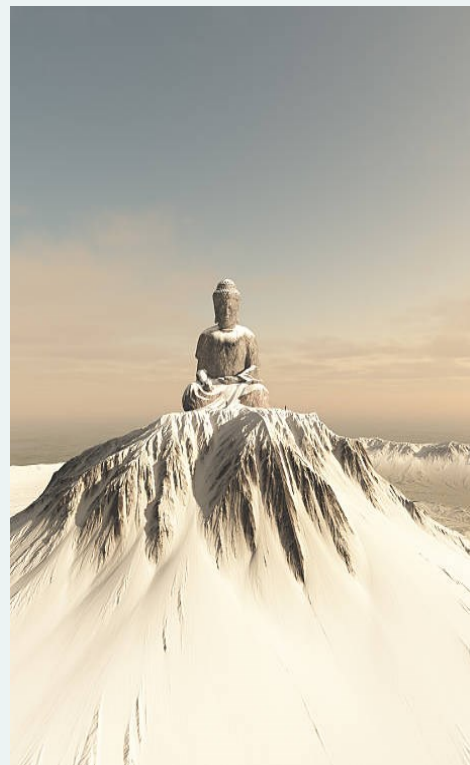
I feel so fortunate to have such a wonderful Dharma family in Alberta, Canada. This is the only place I specifically use the word Dharma family, and it certainly brings warmth.

In 2024, we will start the year with the focus on the female leaders in the sangha and matriarchally nurturing culture, and we will further direct our attention to all the men who need space and time to feel safe, vulnerable... and silly. Lol!

By the way, my Dharma name is **Sento** 仙桃, meaning peach in ancient China that gave longevity and eternal life to those who ate it, and **Gyokei** 行敬, practice with respect. This is where I come back to and this is where I find my beginner's mind.

It's been wonderful to deepen our Dharma practice together in such an amazing community. I wish you a happy holiday and a wonderful new year!

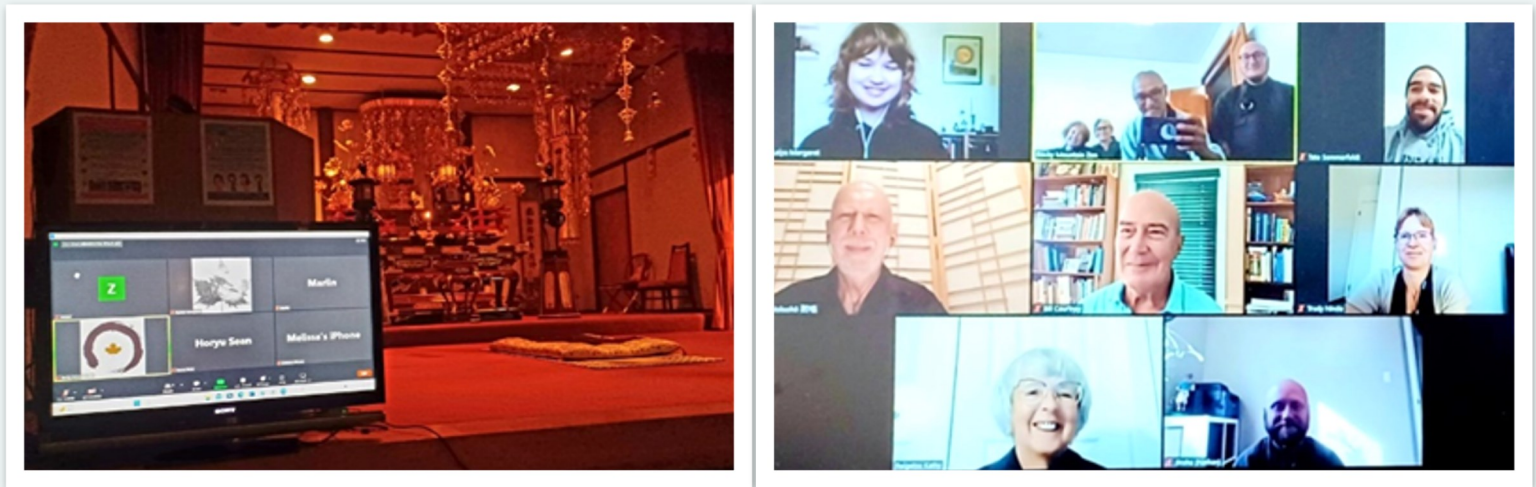
Gassho,
Gyokei Yokoyama, Guiding Teacher of Rocky Mountain Zen



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ZEN

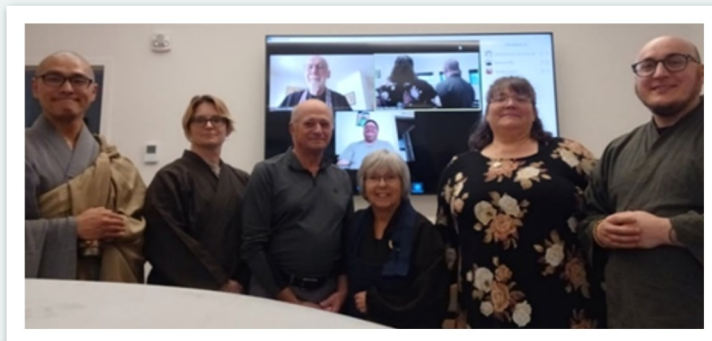
REGULAR ONLINE PRACTICE AND BOOK CLUB

Many thanks to Reigetsu 怜月Kathy, Horyu 法隆 Sean, Lin-ne 輪慧 Melissa and Marianne 想凜 So-rin and Leiyu 怜優 Margaret for continuing to announce and lead the practice. Also many thanks to Sogaku 祖覚 Randall, Amber, Nathan, Marlin and Mokushō 黙照 Michel for their participation. We are also happy to have our new friends Bill, Nindo 忍道 Trudy and Deborah joining us this year.



Weekend Zazen-kai, Feb. 2023

RMZ held a weekend Zazen-kai in the Bunka Centre at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden with Lauri-Ann, Sean, Kathy, Gyokei, Melissa, JP, Margaret, Randall joining us from Tennessee, and Mokusho from Quebec.



Zendo Pets of Rocky Mountain Zen *In Memoriam*



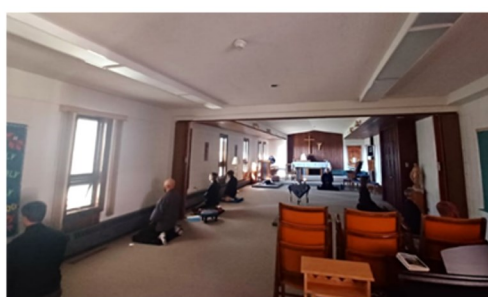
Our RMZ member Horyu 法隆 Sean unfortunately lost his beloved companion Mittens this year. Mittens was a fixture at the Edmonton zendo Saturday morning services, where he loved to get scratches (but not too many), steal warm spots on the cushions and get up close during prostrations. Naps on his favorite chair during zazen were also high on his list. He was a true bodhisattva, living life to the fullest, spreading joy, and enjoying his freedom.

You will be dearly missed, Mittens.

Summer Retreat August 24-27, 2023



RMZ had its annual summer retreat at Martha Retreat Center in Lethbridge. Onsen Colleen from the Middle Way Sangha in Victoria and Mountain Rain Zen in Vancouver joined us, and shared teachings on Rakusu sewing.



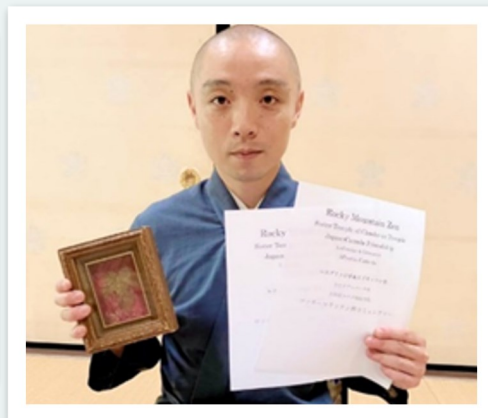
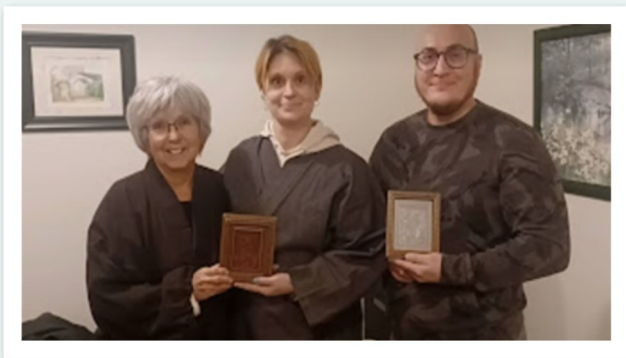
Jukai Ceremony at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, Aug. 27, 2023

Jukai ceremony was held at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden for Lin-ne 輪慧 Melissa, Yu-ryu 宥龍 Marlin, Jin-shu 仁衆 Nathan, Lei-yu 怜優 Margaret and So-rin 想凜 Marianne. With Reigetsu 怜月 Kathy and Horyu 法隆 Sean and Ryugen 瀏源 Aaron. RMZ saw the total of 8 people take 16 Bodhisattva Precepts to join the path of Soto Zen.

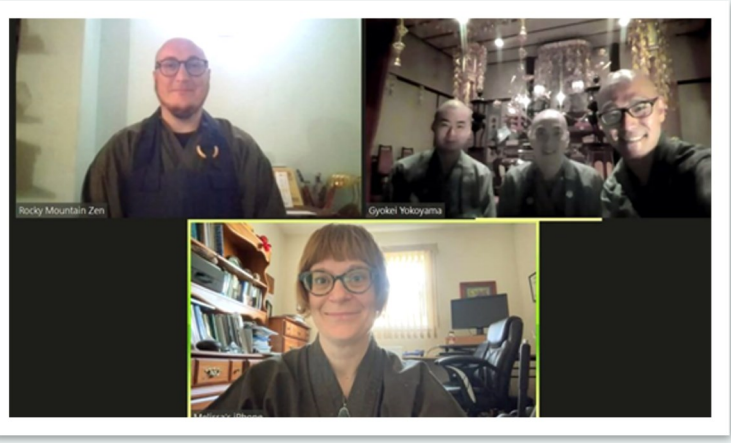


Sister Temples in Japan

Seiryō-ji 清涼寺 temple and Choshō-in 長松院 temple in Hikone, Japan and Rocky Mountain Zen are cherishing their friendship slowly over the exchange Buddhist items and gifts. Gyokan 行寛 san and Kiyo 紀洋 san sent us robes and Horyu 法隆 made this beautiful gift for Gyokan and Kiyo to display in their temples in Hikone city near Kyoto.



Connections with friends in California and Japan

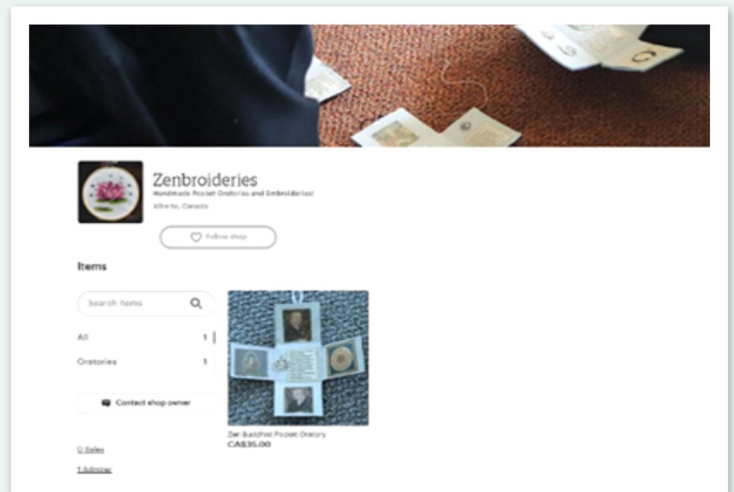


Stacy and Tom Jasmin, Beverly Murata, Masako Linder and Shuken 秀謙 Robert are the one who join the service of Sozenji on Zoom. Rev. Shogen Hisamatsu from Tokyo and Rev. Shisho Hata from Osaka who were staying at Sozenji temple joined our daily Zazen session last month.



RMZ Embroidery Fundraising Project

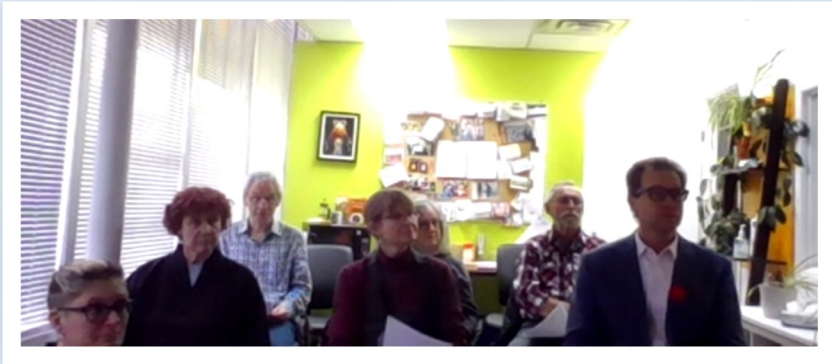
Lei-yu 怜優 Margaret has been dedicating her time and energy to create beautiful pocket oratory embroideries for fundraising for Rocky Mountain Zen.



To purchase, please visit her Etsy shop at:

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/zenbroideries/?etsrc=sdt>

Prayer Service for the victims of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict



Rocky Mountain Zen dedicated a prayer service for the peace and healing of people in Israel and Gaza and dedicated a memorial service to those who were killed in the on-going conflict.

Aaron's Visit to Deer Park Monastery

Aaron visited his mentors Brad and Brenda in the Order of Interbeing in the lineage of Thích Nhất Hạnh in May.

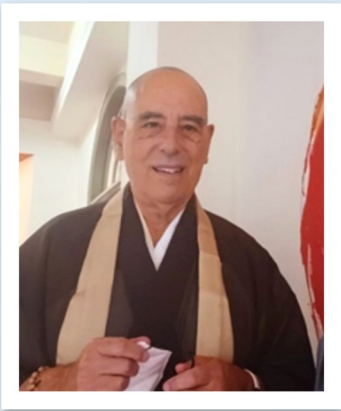
Aaron and Gyokei joined their first in-person Day of Mindfulness and the Lay Ordination Ceremony after the pandemic at Deer Park of Plum Village Tradition

<https://www.youtube.com/live/xfxKgEciCyo?feature=share>

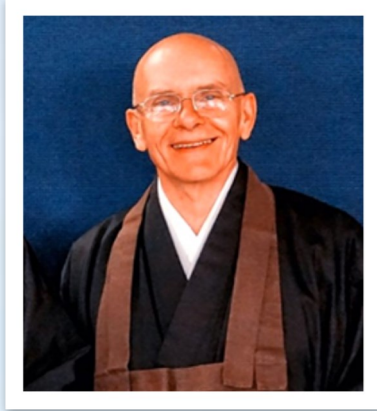


Canadian Soto Zen Teachers

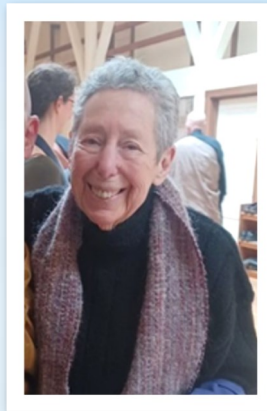
These are some Soto Zen teachers who have dedicated their lives to developing Canadian Soto Zen:



Norman Zoketsu Fischer
San Francisco Zen Center



Shinon Michael Newton
Mountain Rain Zen



Jisan Tova Green
San Francisco Zen Center



Lise Rin Hei Lambert
Dojo Zen Mokusho Ass'n de Montreal



Kate Myoshin McCandless
Mountain Rain Zen



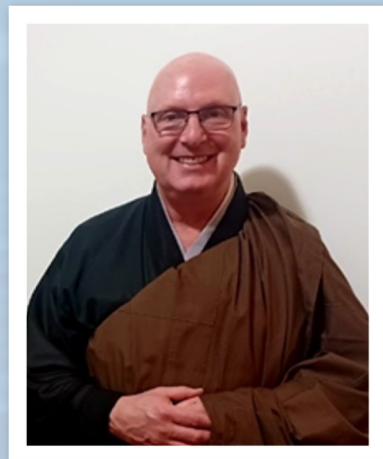
Baizan Tim Sampson
Calgary Soto Zen



Wayne Codling
Middle Way Sangha



Taigen Henderson
Toronto Zen Center



Kuden Paul Boyle
Forest City Zen Group



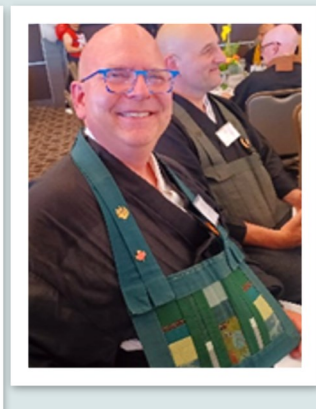
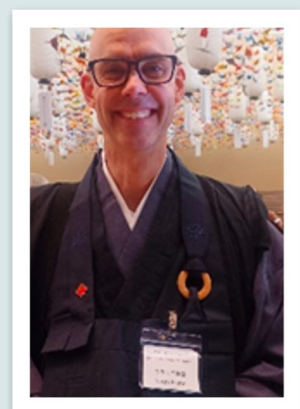
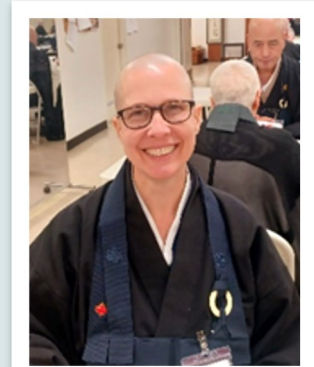
Koun Franz
Thousand Harbours Temple



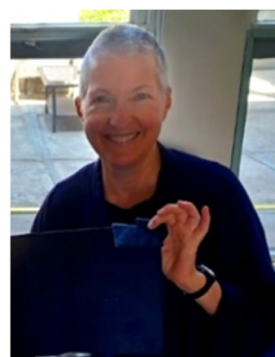
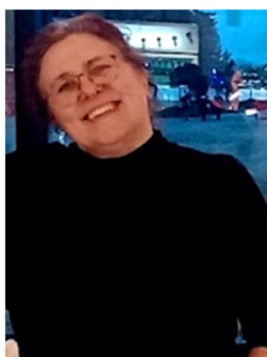
Michel Go Shin Ménard
Dojo Zen Mokusho Ass'n de Montreal

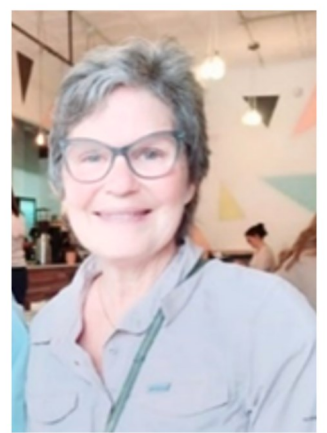
Team Canada

Lin-ne 輪慧 Melissa sent Gyokei 行敬 some maple leaf pins for the American and Japanese Soto Zen Teachers, and Gyokei shared the Canadian pins with all these Zen teachers.



Rocky Mountain Zen Family and Friends





BOOK REVIEW: NOTHING HOLY ABOUT IT—THE ZEN OF BEING JUST WHO YOU ARE

BY TIM BURKETT

Review provided by Trudy (Nindo) of RMZ

Tim Burkett was an early student of Suzuki Roshi and later of Katagiri Roshi, in whose lineage he is a dharma heir. He was the guiding teacher of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center until 2019 and has since retired.

In his unpretentious book "Nothing Holy About it - The Zen of Being Just Who You Are" he packs a lot of wisdom and dharma teachings along with marvellous stories about his teachers, especially Suzuki Roshi.

The book would make a good read along with or following on Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind; both for the way the teachings compliment each other and for getting a more personal glimpse of Suzuki Roshi before he became a legend. Can you imagine that he once played tennis without knowing how to, just to spend time with a student? Or that he ordered a banana split just to look at it in wonder?

Interwoven and inseparable from Tim's dharma wisdom is the story of his own life and the insights he gained from a full career in mental health. In the foreword, Norman Fischer observes that the book is very accessible for people new to Zen, and that Tim explains with "grandfatherly generosity" aspects of the practice "that are usually left unexplained or poorly explained - especially psychological teachings that every contemporary student needs to know".

At the same time, experienced students can gain a lot from the direct, down-to-earth way Tim presents traditional teachings. His psychological insights are eye-opening, and the way every anecdote becomes a teaching story is refreshing. I have a lot of underlining and pencil marks in the book and recommend it very much!

<https://www.amazon.ca/Nothing-Holy-about-Being-Just/dp/161180194X>

Rocky Mountain Zen Online

ZOOM ID: 692 424 2965

M/W/F Sunrise Zazen 6:30 am—7:15 am

Book Club every Wednesday
7:00 pm - 7:45 pm

Full service Sat 9:30 am—10:30 am

www.rockymountainzen.weebly.com

