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# MOUNT ADAMS ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE AT TROUT LAKE ABBEY

TUYẾT SƠN THIÊN TỰ 雪山禪寺

## August 2020

### Weekly Temple Services

**Saturday 9am full service + meditation via ZOOM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89185285652>

**Monday noon meditation via ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/j/366450747>

Dear Ones,

In awareness of the impermanence of life I remind us all of the **5 remembrances** as taught by our historical teacher, The Buddha:

I am of the nature to grow old.  
There is no way to escape growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill health.  
There is no way to escape ill health.

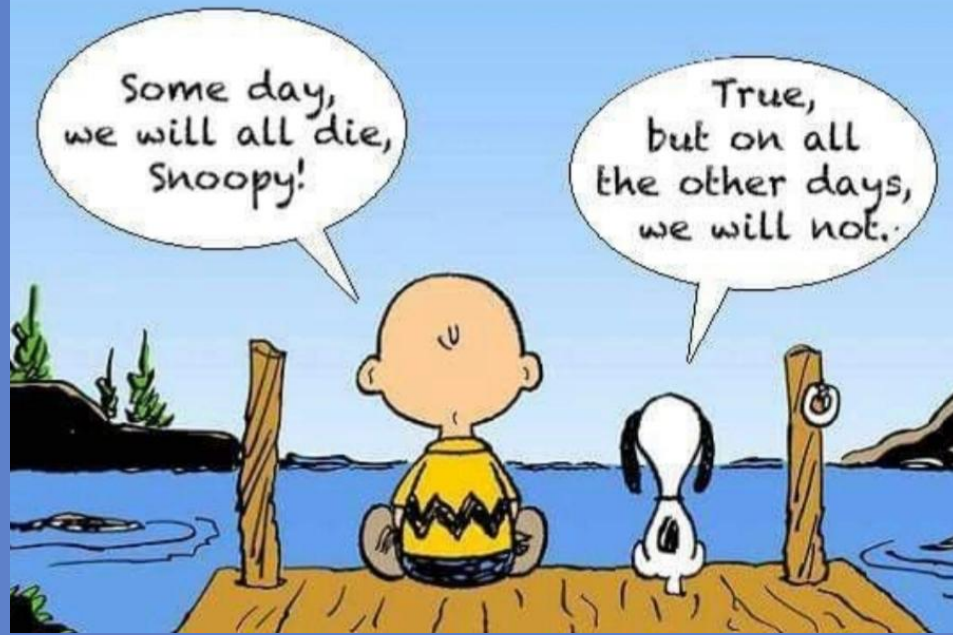
I am of the nature to die.  
There is no way to escape death.

All that is dear to me and everyone I love are the nature to change.  
There is no way to escape being separated from them.

My actions are my only true belongings.  
I cannot escape the consequences of my actions.  
My actions are the ground upon which I stand.

In reminding ourselves of impermanence we can live without fear of old age, sickness, and death. The Buddha tells us that ignorance is the cause of anger. Let us be emissaries of loving kindness in these troubled times. May you be well and healthy.

*In metta, Thay Kozen*



### Special events coming in August:

**Walking Meditations - Saturday 10am - 3 PM at the temple.** We will explore 4 types of walking meditation. We'll keep 10 feet apart (social distancing) and wear masks to protect the health of others. The class is limited to 10 people and will be held in person outside at our temple. Bring water, a pillow, a ground cloth and your lunch (in a cooler).

### Online ONE DAY RETREAT - Saturday 29 August via Zoom.

7:30 AM Meditation  
8:15 AM Journal Writing - actions that have NOT been done in Metta  
9 AM Temple Service & Metta Practice  
11:15 AM Walking Meditation Instruction  
11:45 AM Mindful Eating/ Break  
1:30 PM Dharma Talk  
2:15 PM Metta Practice  
2:30 PM Dharma Sharing  
3 PM Meditation  
3:45 PM Dealing with Life Stress  
4:30 14 movement meditation  
5 PM - ending the retreat.

**THICH NHAT HANH Book Group** - Wednesdays (2nd and 4th Wednesdays) 12 & 26 August 6:30 pm via ZOOM contact Bonnie Withers for details - [bon2626wit@att.net](mailto:bon2626wit@att.net)

### The Buddha's Quotes

Man's body turns to dust, but his influence persists.

We can make use of this life for a better purpose  
by being of service to others,  
by cultivating morality,  
by training the mind,  
and living as cultured men in peace and harmony with the rest of the world.



**Thich Minh Thien's Column**  
(AKA - Thay Z from Arlington Texas)

**The Zoom Sangha**



As we step into the fifth month in the time of Covid-19, many things have changed for all of us. Most are experiencing intense isolation, attempting to keep physical distance not only from strangers, but also from friends, co-workers, spouses, partners, and families. We are unable to utilize establishments that we used to frequent, like movie theaters, gyms, restaurants, barbershops and hair salons, nail salons and the like. When we do step outside the relative safety of our homes for essential goods and services, we hopefully are masking up, washing our hands and using sanitizers, and doing our best to stay a minimum of six feet away from the nearest living being. If we still have gainful employment, we spend that time away from home, experiencing some form of paranoia about contracting this virus. If we lost our employment, we are stressed with how do we recreate a revenue stream to support us and our families. And, for most of us, our places of collective spiritual refuge have also closed as gatherings present an unusual danger in this time of Covid-19. The impermanence of our lives before Covid-19 has become most evident and change will continue to be the constant as we move through this time.

But, as my mother used to say, "...where there is a will, there's a way..." and one way this has occurred can be seen in the rising of media technology to support the dwindling social interactions we all are experiencing as a result of living in the time of Covid-19. And this has been very true in our use of a media called Zoom. In a simple format, this tool permits families and friends to connect visually, co-workers to attend meetings and training and government to operate on some level. We are also finding people seeking out kindred spirits on Zoom to share cooking secrets, participate in yoga sessions, and to undertake educational opportunities.

We have even found it useful for supporting our spiritual needs. A few months ago, the thought was that if we cannot physically bring people to our temples and churches, maybe we could still connect as community through this Zoom media. So, with a little bit of social media advertising and by word of mouth, a distanced Sangha was formed to meet each Saturday, using Zoom, to share, to hear a Dharma talk and to meditate together. Before we knew it, 20-25 people from many different locations were joining in. We even began to refer to ourselves as a Sangha. My reference was that it was Zen Zooming.

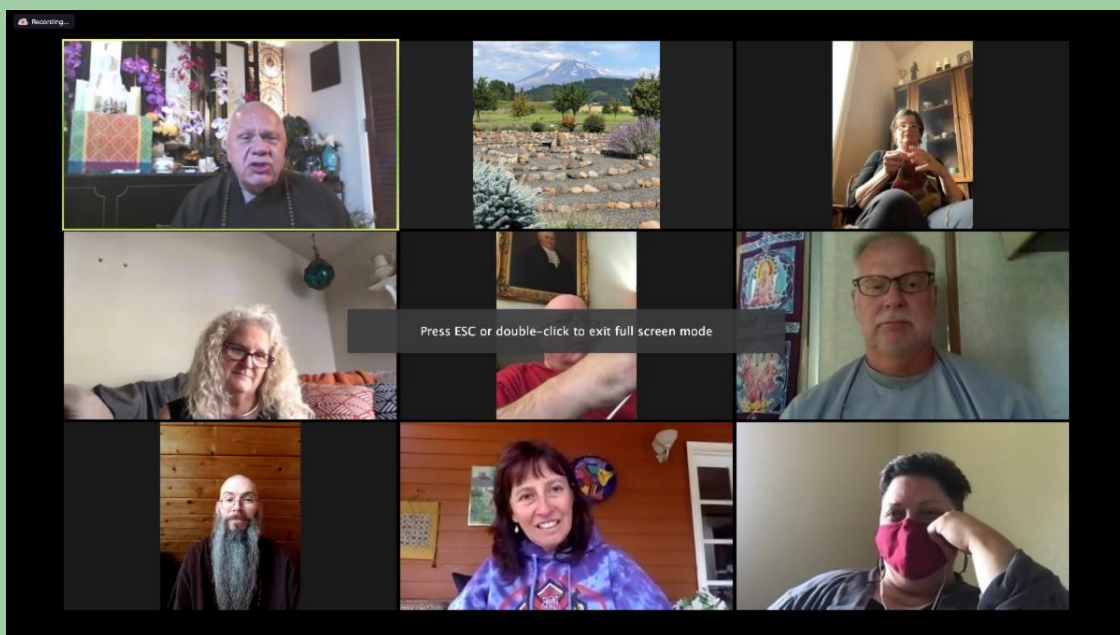
Late in July, Mount Adams took a leap of faith and offered a 7 day Zoom Retreat. People could drop in through Zoom to any part of the retreat. Eighteen individuals signed up and this new experience was off and running. There were some technical difficulties along the way due to intermittent internet issues, but all in all, it felt a lot like many of the in-person retreats I have attended. There were numerous opportunities for meditation, walking meditation, Metta practice, talks by numerous teachers, sharing, readings and watching of recommended video presentations. Though I may have been skeptical at first about how all of this would come together, indeed it did, and successfully. There are future plans for more retreats of differing durations and an excitement by many about being part of it.

So life in the time of Covid-19 will continue to present challenges to life as we knew it. Our practice will continue to support us individually to accept what is and buffer the effects both personally and communally with Loving Kindness and Compassion. And I think, the abilities we are finding in our social media will support us as Sangha to experience the support and caring of our sisters and brothers on this wonderful philosophy for living bequeathed to us by our historical teacher, the Buddha, 2600 years ago.

*namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa*

### On Line retreat

These are screen shots from two of the 30 plus sessions offered during our week long retreat.



Up to 20+ people joined the retreat for Dharma talks, meditation, metta, and practices.





**Venerable Jeff Miles**  
**Fa Hsing 法行, Thich Tâm Minh 心明**

like a river undammed  
 running wild and free  
 my thoughts flow unhindered  
 on their way to the sea

unable to alter  
 their speed or their course  
 I turn my attention  
 to finding their source

\*\*\*\*

Rippling in the summer breeze,  
 an avalanche of lilies  
 cascades down the mountainside.

\*\*\*\*

I've a hut with no walls  
 to hinder the breeze,  
 and a window of sky  
 framed only by trees.

**As a Buddhist, what is the response when asked for money from a street person?**  
**by Rev. Jean-Luc Devis**

In our community we often see homeless and street people camped along the local river, in wooded parks, and along city back alleys and storefronts. With the raging Coronavirus pandemic impacting the unemployment rate, coupled with limited government financial support we will only see the homeless population increase as individuals lose the ability to pay rent or mortgages and subsequently lose the place they live in.

Walking through downtown Corvallis, or most any other town, one often is approached by street people or homeless individuals usually holding a sign and/or asking for money. As a Buddhist practitioner studying to be a minister, I often reflect on how best to handle this situation. My daily metta practice of compassion and loving kindness helps ground me in the Buddhist practices that govern my decision making and behavior. Generosity comes in many forms with the simplest being donating money. Compassionate

listening, encouragement, connection or providing material things are other options besides money. So, when I am confronted with a homeless person who asks for money do I just give them the money? As in most situations I start with a question I am familiar with that usually yields great results. **What would the Buddha do?** I believe the Buddha would suggest we use “skillful means” to assess the situation.

So what does this “skillful means” look like? The story of the Burning House in the Lotus Sutra helps us better understand. There are three elements to “skillful means”.

1. First, it must be appropriate. This means that the actions must be for the benefit of the other person, not for showing off or benefiting one’s self.
2. Second, the action must utilize skillfulness by determining the best method to use in particular situations. Best methods would include asking if we have truly understood their needs and adapted our interaction to their capacity for comprehension. Is this situation straightforward or does it need creative and imaginative solutions? Have I found a way to connect human to human.
3. The third element is that it must be effective – the method must work. Sometimes the shortest distance between two points of view is not a straight line.

By connecting through eye contact, smiling, and compassionate conversation one can begin to relate to an individual’s suffering and needs. Acknowledging they exist as a fellow human being is a good beginning.

The other day at an interstate rest area I encountered a woman with a sign stating a need for money. I walked up to chat with her to better understand her situation. I knelt down to present myself eye to eye. She was highly emotional indicating she had been grossly mistreated by a passer-by and needed to express herself which she did with tears. She wanted to be heard and I believe her need was that of safety, connection and compassion and not necessarily money. Seeing the pain she was in required deep listening to discover the source of her pain. This form of generosity is compassion and kindness. On the streets of Corvallis homeless individuals often ask for money for food but is this what they are really needing and am I in a position to truly know what they really need? If it really is food that they need I carry small denomination food gift cards for local chain restaurants. This then specifically becomes a gift of food and not drugs or alcohol. Money seems to be the easiest gift and is universal however is that what is really being requested. Giving money to a homeless person or panhandler is easy from the giving perspective but is it the right thing to do? It may not be the best choice for them and make actually hurt them. Generosity in the form of materialism may or may not be the answer here.

I read about something called **Blessing Bags** which are zip-lock plastic bags that contain snacks, travel-size toiletries, socks, bottled water, and/or grooming supplies. These bags can be conveniently kept in your car or handbag and made available when one encounters a person in need.

So next time you encounter someone at a street corner asking for a donation, take the time to connect with them and share a few words. Being homeless is a lonely lifestyle and being a friendly human with them is a good beginning.

## **Burning Incense & Candles: What to Consider when Caring for Your Home Altar & Living Spaces** *By Rev. Valerie Grigg Devis*

In our living room, my husband and I share a small home altar, located inside a cabinet door. We typically light a candle and a stick of incense during our morning meditation together.

The altar has evolved over time. The objects include a bell, an incense holder and a candle. We also have paper “lotus flowers” with names of those who are sick and suffering, who are remembered in our practice. The altar is also decorated with photos of our zen teachers, tiny Tibetan prayer flags, river stones and a thorn branch retrieved from the fur of a stray cat we feed. I’d have to honestly say it’s a bit cluttered.

Recently, I learned that our practice of burning candles and incense is something we need to be more aware of, due to some rather serious health risks. As someone who has a tendency toward respiratory problems, it’s time to ask: How important are candles and incense for home use, anyway?

### **HEALTH CONCERNS WITH BURNING INCENSE & CANDLES**

Breathing too much of any type of smoke can potentially damage your health. The pollutants released by incense and candles depends on the chemicals present in the substance being burned. When incense is burned indoors, the smoke created during this process can be a major source of indoor pollutants, as it produces both harmful gas and particulate matter. According to the EPA, exposure to the particulate matter present in incense smoke has been linked to asthma, lung inflammation and even cancer. In fact, long-term exposure to incense smoke was found to be related to an increased risk for upper respiratory cancers as well as squamous cell lung cancer.

Likewise, burning candles made of paraffin releases soot, which is somewhat akin to that released from a diesel engine. According to the EPA, candle smoke can also include fine particulates, especially when the candles are smokey. (2) In addition, the EPA found that candle wicks containing lead (typically found in imported candles) can create indoor concentrations of lead above EPA recommended levels. Other harmful chemicals, such as formaldehyde, can also be produced at levels above EPA recommendations.

(1) Anyone who doubts that candle smoke produces significant indoor pollution can consider the restoration of the famous Sistine Chapel from years of candle smoke! (2)



But why is all this particulate matter *so bad for your health*? These particles and chemical compounds are dangerous because they are small enough to inhale. They can travel deep into your respiratory tract, including the tiny sacs in your lungs, and even make it into your bloodstream. Once clogged or compromised, lung sacs are not easily restored. This is particularly concerning for infants and children. Yes, pets can be affected, too.

So, if you choose to use either incense or candles in your home, please consider one or more precautions for the health and safety of your household:

**(1) Keep Incense and Candles in one Room, Only:** Avoid regular use in high-traffic areas of your house, especially if anyone in your household has existing lung conditions. Having a specific area that is used for little else may decrease your exposure to pollutants in smoke.

**(2) Increase Ventilation:** Open windows and doors to improve airflow. But avoid drafts, which increase smoke production. Keep candle wicks trimmed and snuff out candles for the same reason.

**(3) Switch to Safer Products:**

**INCENSE:** Not all incense is created equally. Begin by choosing from those made from natural, plant-based ingredients without the addition of harmful chemicals. Consider trying smokeless or low-smoke varieties. Avoid using any incense sticks that contain a wooden core – which is typically chemically treated – indoors.

Our Abbot Ven. Kozen recommends VIVA Japanese brand cedar incense for lower toxic factors than other brands. You can shop at <https://www.nipponkodostore.com/> for this and other temple incense supplies.

**CANDLES:** Commercially produced candles contain a variety of compounds, and some are cleaner than others. Consider choosing natural candles made of ingredients such as coconut wax, beeswax and vegetable wax. To eliminate combustion altogether, electric candles with wax exteriors that have a natural glow. Many models come with an internal timer to switch themselves on and off! These are now standard in our home, following a near disaster with live candles and holiday greenery.

Remember: Any burning substance may cause health issues. ***Please take good care of your lungs!***

#### **HOME ALTAR DO-OVER**

Based on these health concerns, we may decide to discontinue use of incense and candles on our home altar (it was over crowded anyway!). I'll miss the scent of incense, but fresh flowers, essential oils, a cool breeze...any of these can add to the atmosphere of our mediation space.

So, what might a health-aware home altar consist of? One simple option would be a shelf containing a small statue, such as Avoloketesvara, Bodhisattva of Compassion, a bell for use in mediation, an electric candle that flickers in a natural way (with a re-chargeable battery, of course), photographs of honored teachers, and natural objects, such as pebbles and flowers. Such an altar would be free of any harmful emissions! Ideally, it would be elevated in a way that honors its role, while also being accessible to all household members beyond infancy, so that everyone can participate with it.

#### **REFERENCES:**

(1) "Candles and Incense as Potential Sources of Indoor Air Pollution: Market Analysis and Literature Review"; United States Environmental Protection Agency; January, 2001.

For more information about Incense & Candle Smoke:

<https://molekule.science/is-incense-smoke-bad-for-you/>

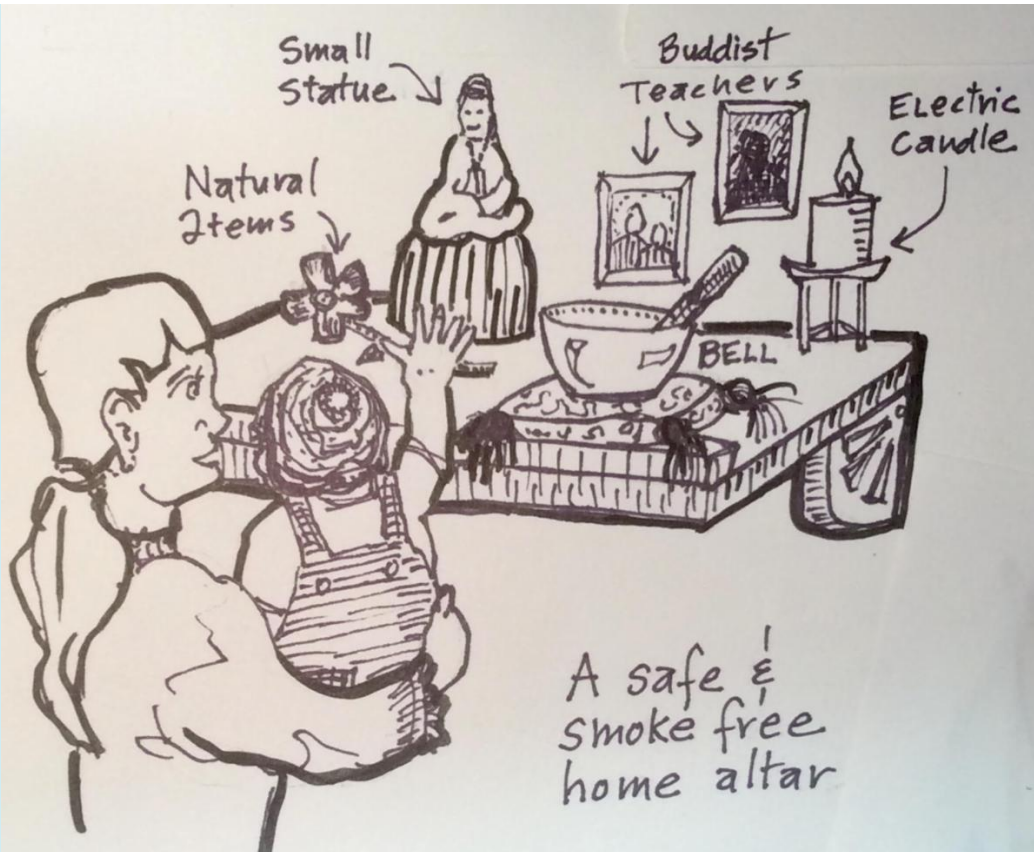
[https://www.healthline.com/health/are-candles-bad-for-](https://www.healthline.com/health/are-candles-bad-for-you#:~:text=Burning%20candles%20releases%20volatile%20organic,to%20heart%20and%20lung%20problems.)

[you#:~:text=Burning%20candles%20releases%20volatile%20organic,to%20heart%20and%20lung%20problems.](https://www.healthline.com/health/are-candles-bad-for-you#:~:text=Burning%20candles%20releases%20volatile%20organic,to%20heart%20and%20lung%20problems.)

(2) Sistine Chapel Ceiling Restoration explained:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restoration\\_of\\_the\\_Sistine\\_Chapel\\_frescoes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restoration_of_the_Sistine_Chapel_frescoes)

(3) More about the History of Incense: A fascinating article about Koh-Do ("the Way of Incense") in Japan: <https://www.nipponkodostore.com/The-History-of-Incense-s/439.htm>



A safe &  
smoke free  
home altar





# Mt. Adams Buddhist Temple

Temple Service  
& Dharma Talk  
Sat 9-10 am  
via ZOOM  
[https://us02web.  
zoom.us/j/89185  
285652](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89185285652)

Insight Mindfulness  
Meditation  
w/ Rev. August Jensen  
and Kaye Jones  
Thursdays 5-6 pm  
Join at this [LINK](#)  
or call in via phone-  
+1 512-402-2718  
PIN: 1701881995#

Trinity Sangha  
Meditation  
Mondays 12-1 pm  
via ZOOM  
[https://zoom.us/  
/366450747](https://zoom.us/j/366450747)

Counseling Support  
(online)  
August Jensen  
august@gorge  
counseling.com  
  
Recovery Support  
Dick Withers  
richard.withers@att.net

# MEDITATION GROUPS

## IN THE GORGE 2020

### COVID-19 CHANGES



## Other Practice and Study Groups

Trinity Sangha Study Group - 2nd and 4th Wed 6:30- 8:00 pm -  
contact [bwithers261@gmail.com](mailto:bwithers261@gmail.com)

Heart Devotion Meditation w/Emily Martin Sundays from 9-10 am via  
ZOOM <http://bit.ly/heartdevotion>.

Recovery Dharma - Wednesdays 7-8:15 pm & Sundays 6:15-7:30pm  
via ZOOM <https://zoom.us/j/6585138476>

Second Saturdays 11-12:30 via ZOOM <https://zoom.us/j/754615114>

Mindfulness & Meditation Group - first Sunday of each month 4-  
5:15pm check [HERE](#) for updates to online offerings

Yoga w/Laurie VanCott via Zoom - Mondays 5-6:15 pm [HERE](#) pswd:140400  
Tuesdays 8-9 am [HERE](#) pswd:285192  
Thursdays 8-9 am [HERE](#) pswd: 852204

[Trinity Natural  
Medicine](#) is offering  
numerous classes  
online, please see  
their full schedule  
[HERE](#)

Join the Columbia  
Gorge  
Mindfulness  
Facebook page

Scott Rower's  
Mindfulness  
Event Calendar

5/20/20

*May the Infinite Light of Wisdom and Compassion so shine within us  
that the errors and vanities of self may be dispelled;  
so shall we understand the changing nature of existence and awaken into spiritual peace.*

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98650 509.395.2030 [www.Mtadamszen.org](http://www.Mtadamszen.org)