

MAY 2024

# O-AN NEWSLETTER



## Vesak Sesshin

O-An Zendo held its first Sesshin (multi-day retreat) of the year from April 5th to April 7th. The occasion was Vesak, a gathering to celebrate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha. Ten retreatants took up residence at O-An Zendo and sat together, walked together, ate together, and more.

Nine bows of deep gratitude for those who made this intensive practice opportunity possible!

## Shuso Hossen

Shuso Hossen (Dharma Connection Ceremony) was the ceremonial conclusion to this year's winter Ango and the Vesak Sesshin. Daigen Ross McCurdy, O-An Zendo's 2024 Shuso (Head Student), received and responded to many heartfelt Dharma questions from the sangha, friends, and family, and both those in-person and by Zoom.

There was much joy and laughter as Daigen transitioned from "senior junior" to "junior senior." Thank you everyone for your participation!







## The Sangha Returns!

O-An Zendo resumed in-person practice on Sunday, April 14th. We are delighted to welcome back the local sangha for service and sitting on Sundays, monthly “afternoons of Samu,” a mid-summer Women’s Sesshin, and more.

Subscribe to our mailing list and keep an eye on our website’s Events page to learn of opportunities for visiting and practicing at O-An Zendo.

## Centre Gives/Dōkusan Room

Mark your calendars and watch your inbox for information about Centre Gives (May 8th and 9th), an annual online giving event that supports Centre County non-profit organizations. Your gift will help O-An Zendo create a new Dōkusan room and retreat space in the main house.

An initial announcement has been circulated, with a couple more to follow. We are grateful for your support in this effort.

## An Afternoon of Samu

Please join us on Sunday, May 19th, for an Afternoon Of Samu (Work Practice). After the Sunday program, we will enjoy a light social lunch. Then, we will spend some hours caring for the temple and its grounds. The afternoon concludes with tea.

If you plan to attend, RSVP by Sunday, May 12th, to: [oanzendo@gmail.com](mailto:oanzendo@gmail.com)

# Letter from the Abbess

Dear Sangha:

As a woman who has received Shiho, or Dharma Transmission, in the Phoenix Cloud Lineage, I am delighted to announce O-An Zendo's first women's sesshin: **Moon On The Water**.

We will gather during the auspicious celestial events of the summer solstice and full moon: Thursday evening, June 20th, through Sunday afternoon, June 23rd. The sesshin will culminate with Jukai, a ceremony during which three of our Dharma sisters, Sherri Hankal, Georgi Johnson, and Joanna Lewis, will receive the Ten Clear Mind Precepts in lay ordination.

In addition to Zazen and Kin Hin, we will explore Zen practice through various forms of chanting, yoga, Japanese ceremonial tea, scroll-making, and koans written by women. A highlight of the sesshin will be the creation of an outdoor shrine dedicated to Mahapajapati, our first woman ancestor. With the creation of this new shrine, O-An Zendo will be recognizing and celebrating the generations of women who helped to transmit the Buddha's teachings and continue to guide all beings along the Buddha Way.

The [schedule](#) for the Moon On The Water Sesshin and the [Registration Form](#) are attached. The fee for the 3 nights, including 7 three bowl meals is \$350, non-refundable. Attendance for the entire 3+ days is required. There are 2 spaces available on a first-come-first-served basis. Registration will be confirmed with payment either via PayPal or check made payable to O-An Zendo.

All Sangha members, friends, and family are welcome to join us for the Jukai Ceremony, followed by a reception on Sunday, June 23rd.

Enlightenment is like the moon reflected on the water.  
The moon does not get wet, nor is the water broken.  
Although its light is wide and great,  
The moon is reflected even in a puddle an inch wide.  
The whole moon and the entire sky  
Are reflected in one dewdrop on the grass.  
~ Dōgen Zenji

Meidō Barbara Anderson, Roshi  
Abbess and Guiding Teacher of O-An Zendo

# Sangha Spotlight: Keith Shiley & Shanon Solava

Hi, we're Keith and Shanon—husband and wife, best friends, business partners, bodhisattvas-in-training, and companions on the spiritual journey. We joined O-An Zendo last year seeking to deepen our Buddhist study and meditation practice and connect with fellow travelers. We're committed to daily zazen and learning and practicing the noble eightfold path to alleviate suffering in the world. Since joining O-An we've been grateful for the support and nourishment we've received from sitting with the sangha on Sunday mornings, budding friendships, listening to dharma talks, dokusan with Meido, and participating in winter Ango practice. We're currently looking forward to our next retreat in June with Meido as the visiting teacher at Olean Meditation Center. Thank you all!



We've been together since 2014 and married in 2019 in a ceremony officiated by Keith's mom, a United Church of Christ pastor. We consolidated our businesses the following year in 2020, and today we co-own and operate Shylava, a boutique digital marketing and design agency serving small business clients around the USA. We're avid hikers and explorers, so we relocated from Lancaster, PA, to the Pine Creek Valley in 2022 to live among northern Pennsylvania's beautiful mountains, forests, and waterways. When we aren't working, hiking, or meditating, you're likely to find us working on our land, tending our vegetable garden and medical herbs, planting trees, cooking, baking, or reading on the couch with our cat, Captain Stormy Thunderpaws. Shanon is currently reading *Active Hope* by Macy & Johnstone, *Mother of the Buddhas* by Lex Hixon, and her ongoing favorites *The Dhammapada* and *The Healing Garden: Cultivating and Handcrafting Herbal Remedies* by Juliet Blankespoor. Keith is currently reading Leo Tolstoy's essays and Shantideva's *The Way of the Bodhisattva*.



Keith was born and raised in Lancaster and has lived and worked in Pittsburgh, the San Francisco Bay Area, Santa Barbara, CA, and Scottsdale, AZ. Shanon was born and raised in Reedsville, PA. After studying at Millersville University and Penn State University she was very involved in community building as a facilitator and trainer in youth development, philanthropy, and social change.





# BUDDHAS ARE BORN

Above: Elowyn and Lynden/Shulong's babies  
Below: Max/Ramon's baby

