

Abbot's letter  
Summer Ango 2025

Dear Village Zendo sangha,

As we all know, this year has been a time of exceptional conflict and change in this country as a whole and we are all feeling the effects of it at the local and personal level. At the Village Zendo, we've made a conscious effort to come to terms with the challenges through our practice, teachings, and community activity. Our upcoming **Summer Ango** period from **July 18 to August 3** gives us the opportunity to go even deeper. We have the opportunity to dwell in peace (the meaning of the Sanskrit word *ango*) and to reunite the scattered or shattered pieces of our mind (the meaning of the Japanese word *sesshin* or retreat). This deep and concentrated practice in the midst of conflicts and confusion, not apart from them, can allow the wisdom and compassion of the Bodhisattva to emerge naturally.

Our study text this Summer Ango is the Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra (*Prāṇāpāramitāhṛdaya*). This core teaching in Buddhism spells out the ephemeral and interdependent nature of all things, and offers a path of liberation from our illusions and attachments. We will also work with Enkyo Roshi's *A Winter Sesshin*, a marvelous set of talks on the Heart Sutra. It will help us with our task to realize this teaching intimately in our own lives. The **study texts** can be found below.

Our student leader or Shuso this Summer Ango is Navah Torei Steiner. Torei is a psychotherapist who focusses on issues of self-exploration, creativity, and healing and an activist advocating for peace and justice in Israel and Palestine. Torei has been a part of our community since 2008. Over the years, they have practiced regularly at the zendo in the mornings, participated in retreats, supported our liturgy as Ino or chant leader, and made practice an integral part of their personal life and collective engagements. It is fitting that they now serve the sangha as Shuso. Torei has prepared a template that can help to direct your practice. This **Ango Commitment Form** is also found below.

I want to encourage all of us to take advantage of the opportunities available during our Summer Ango. Let us go deep during this period, investigating change and interdependency and walking forward on the Bodhisattva path in our troubled times.

Bows,



Shinryu Roshi