



The Sitting Room

A letter from the Greenville Zen Center

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A PLACE TO BEGIN

A door of our own.

Last autumn, two of us drove into the mountains for a sesshin, several days of silence and zazen kept in the old way. We arrived as students and we left as students, which is the point. On the drive home, somewhere along the dark highway back to the upstate, a plain thought arrived and stayed. What we had just received was a long way from home, and Greenville wanted a door of its own into this practice.

That thought became this. The Greenville Zen Center is a lay-led Sōtō Zen sitting group, built by volunteers and rooted in the practice as it has been carried down through the tradition. We are not teachers. We are people who sit, who have been shown a little, and who wanted a place nearby to keep returning to.

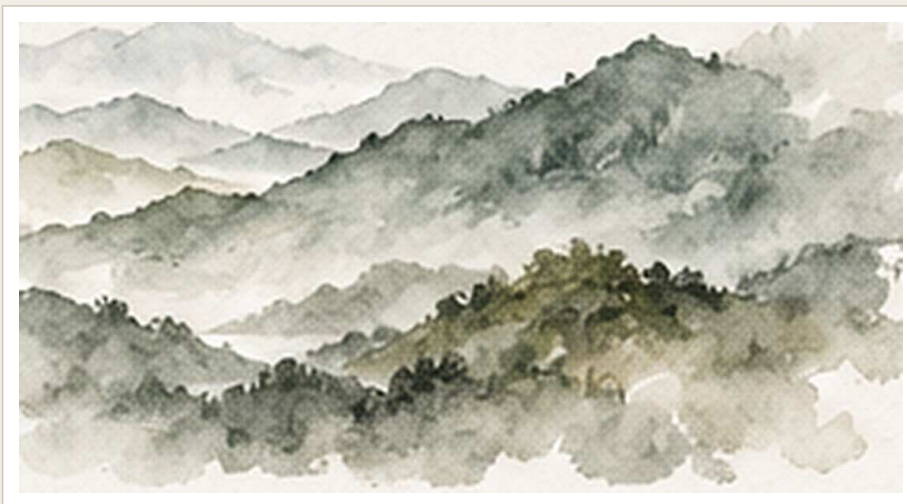


A PLACE TO BEGIN · CONTINUED

One practice rests at the center of everything we will do, and it has a name. 只管打坐, shikantaza, just sitting. Sitting that reaches for nothing and fixes nothing, upright and awake, the body still and the morning unfolding around it. Everything else we build, the room, the schedule, the community, exists to hold that one simple thing.

So this is a beginning, and beginnings in this tradition carry their own weight. Beginner's mind is the whole of it. Whatever you bring, whatever you know or have yet to learn about meditation, you already have what the cushion asks for. You belong here from the first morning. We hope you will come and sit.

“Whatever you bring, you already have what the cushion asks for. You belong here from the first morning.”



FROM THE CUSHION

With gratitude.

To the founding circle of this center, the people who gave before there was anything to show for it, who offered space and time and encouragement, who said yes while this was still an idea on a dark highway: thank you. You know who you are. This center stands because you carried it here.

A word about how we begin. We are lay-led and unaffiliated, with a tradition we trust, a handful of people willing to show up early on a Sunday, and the intention to keep returning. That has been enough to start every sitting community that ever lasted, and it is enough to start this one.

We also begin in good company. Genjo Tre Williams, a teacher from Great Tree in the North Carolina mountains, will sit with us on July 5 and help guide our first morning. To open with a teacher of the tradition present among us is a gift, and a fitting way to begin. We are honored to welcome him, and grateful for the friendship taking root between our young sangha and Great Tree.





THE PRACTICAL

The first sit.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

WHEN	Sunday, July 5. Orientation for newcomers at 8:00 a.m. Zazen begins at 8:15.
WHERE	Cancer Survivors Park. Park at 44 Cleveland Street; the building is at 52 Cleveland Street, Greenville, SC 29601. We meet indoors. From the lot, walk down to the Swamp Rabbit Trail and follow it toward the river. The entrance is there, beneath the tall steel canopy that looks like a circus tent. Parking is free.
RSVP	Let us know you are coming at luma.com/6lullzcm
COST	Free. Offerings are gratefully received and given freely.

THE MORNING, START TO FINISH

8:00	Orientation for new students.
8:15	Zazen , seated meditation.
8:45	Kinhin , walking meditation.
8:55	Zazen .
9:15	A brief dharma reading and conversation.
9:30	Dismissal .

GOOD TO KNOW

What to bring. Yourself, and a cushion or mat if you have one. We will have a few on hand for those who need them, and a chair is always fine. Wear loose, comfortable clothing.

Before we begin. Please leave your phone in the car, or set it to silent. The morning keeps a simple silence, and you will be guided in everything else.

Newcomers. Especially welcome. You already have what the cushion asks for, so come exactly as you are.

After July 5. We gather on the first and third Sundays. The next sit is Sunday, July 19. Everything lives at greenvillezen.org.





IN GASSHO

Until that morning.

We will gather for the first time on the morning of July 5. If you have read this far, consider yourself invited, and consider passing this letter to one person who might want to sit. A community is built one returning person at a time.

Until that morning, be well, and sit when you can.



THE GREENVILLE ZEN CENTER • IN GASSHO

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