

RYUMONJI ZEN MONASTERY



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Let's Keep Walking

Everyone wants to be happy. When things do not go our way, we can be very unhappy.

Sometimes life can get pretty *hard* and *heart-rending*. How do you walk without wearing a *tearful face*?

To *walk steadily* is to stand up in the realm of the whole universe. Life has its own rhythm. To walk steadily is to walk with the Universe. We want the universe to revolve around us, but the universe is far larger than our selves. We are not separate from the universe. Everyone wants to control their lives so that things go your way. But to truly satisfy yourself, you have to be willing to open yourself to the flow of the universe. This is to find peace and harmony with all beings.

When things don't go our way, we wear a tearful face. We expect more and want more. But, one plus one does not always equal two. Sometimes you have to deal with situations as they are. Sometimes things do not make sense and are far more complicated than we anticipated. It's hard to deal with situations as they are!

I have a friend who had a stroke in the prime of his life. He had just been married for a couple of years. He and his wife have learned to live their lives without a tearful face. To walk steadily takes courage. You have to be willing to embrace your life as it is.

Sometimes the wind blows in ways we don't like. Storms are part of life. To walk steadily is to keep your boat pointed into the waves. Otherwise you can get swamped pretty easily. Stormy weather comes up in everyone's life. Again and again you have to adjust your boat into the waves so that you don't get broad-sided and capsized. It's part of living.

Everyone feels inadequate when it comes to living true Reality. No one feels *ready* to deal with life as it is. We hold on to notions of time and our own ideas of how things should be. Ultimately we need to get with *what is*, otherwise we suffer a lot and there's a huge gap between ourselves and what is.

When the bottom falls out of something and you are knee deep in muddy water, this is where life begins. It is in that muddy water that the lotus flower blooms. Blooming in muddy waters is Zen practice. Zen master Dogen says, "If you want to attain suchness, you should practice suchness without delay." What is *suchness*? It's life as it is! To practice suchness you have to be willing to deal with things as they are. It's a matter of everydayness. Walking steadily is blooming even in muddy waters.

To walk steadily is a spiritual practice. It involves embracing the ten directions and whatever comes your way. It's a vow to be made every morning. It is the vow to embrace the whole of life. To live this vow is to jump into the flow of life. It's like a leaping fish. We all need help with living. So let's walk steadily hand in hand. This is to live our lives . . . and our death! It is the art of living.

Shoken Winecoff
Ryumonji Abbot

20th Anniversary Celebration

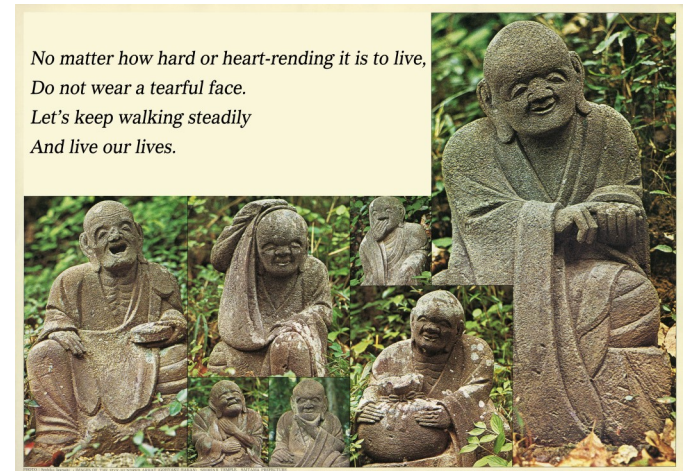
On July 19, 2020 Ryumonji will celebrate its 20th Anniversary. This observance will be held in conjunction with Ryumonji's July sesshin.

In 2000, land was dedicated to develop a Zen Buddhist training monastery in the American Midwest. This is the first entity in the United States built from the ground up as a traditional monastery structure, transmitted through China and Japan.

Ryumonji dedicated its Hatto (Buddha Hall) in 2004. At the same time, Rev. Shoken Winecoff was installed as Abbot of Ryumonji with a Mountain Seat Ceremony and Rev. Jikan Kondrick, who served as the first Shuso of Ryumonji, had her Shuso Ceremony.

Construction continued during subsequent years with building of the Kuin (kitchen/living quarters) in 2007, the Sodo (Monk's Hall) in 2011, and Shuryo (Monks' Study Quarters) in 2013.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join Ryumonji to celebrate this significant anniversary. Further details will be forthcoming. Thank you so much for your support that has helped Ryumonji come so far in such a short time.



Ryumonji Happenings . . .



2019 Ryumonji Summer Ango

Rev. Eishin Houghton served as Shuso for Ryumonji's 2019 Summer Ango. Eishin san is a student of Rev Eido Espe, Vice Abbot of Ryumonji. He is active in the Des Moines Zen Center, Des Moines, IA, Rev. Espe's home temple. Many sangha members from Des Moines, as well as Ryumonji members, joined to support Rev. Houghton during his Shuso Ceremony.

Ryumonji Retreats

Ryumonji hosted its annual Men's Retreat on August 16-18, 2019. The weekend blended work, practice, and study of Dogen's *Instructions to the Cook*. Rev. Shoken Wineoff, Abbott of Ryumonji, and Rev. Jakudo Peterson led the retreat.

Ryumonji also hosted its annual Women's Retreat during the weekend of November 1-3, 2019. Sangha women met to study the Heart Sutra under the guidance of Rev. Taiju Wilimek of Bemidji, MN and Rev. Myoko Demuth of Decorah, IA.

All facilitators are dharma heirs of Rev. Shoken Wineoff.

2020 Ryumonji Angos

Ryumonji will hold Winter and Summer Angos during 2020. Winter Ango will begin on January 17 with January sesshin and conclude on March 1. Rev. Genpo Michael O'Neal will serve as shuso. The Shuso ceremony will be held February 23, 2020.

Summer Ango will begin on June 19 with June sesshin and conclude on August 2, 2020. There will be a special 20th Anniversary Celebration during the July Sesshin on July 19, 2020.

Partial participation in Ryumonji Ango is available if full time attendance is not possible. If you wish to attend either Winter or Summer Ango or the Shuso ceremony on Feb. 23, please register on Ryumonji's website, www.ryumonji.org.

2020 Ryumonji Calendar

Jan 1	New Year's Day Open House
Jan 17-19	Sesshin & Winter Ango Opening
Feb 21-23	Sesshin & Shuso Ceremony
Mar 1	Winter Ango Closing
Mar 20-22	Sesshin
April 4	Spring Fling (New event replacing Winter Gala)
Apr 17-19	Sesshin
May 15-17	Sesshin
Jun 19-21	Sesshin & Summer Ango Opening
July 19	20th Anniversary Celebration
Aug 2	Summer Ango Closing
Aug 14-16	Men's Retreat
Sep 18-20	Sesshin
Oct 11	Taste of Ryumonji
Oct 16-18	Sesshin
Nov 6-8	Women's Retreat
Nov 20-22	Sesshin
Dec 1-8	Rohatsu Sesshin
Dec 31	End of Year Sesshin New Year's Eve Celebration



Public Sittings

Thursday Evenings

7:30 p.m.

Sunday Mornings

9:00 a.m.

For orientation to zazen

please arrive

15 minutes early

To receive future issues of the newsletter electronically, please e-mail: office@ryumonji.org

New Year's at Ryumonji

Ryumonji invites everyone to its annual New Year's festivities, beginning Tuesday, December 31, 2019 through Wednesday, January 1, 2020.

Year End Sesshin—Tuesday, December 31, 2019 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Please register by completing the on-line event registration form on Ryumonji's website.)

New Year's Eve Ceremony and Bell Ringing followed by New Year's Eve party—Tuesday, December 31, 2019 7:30p.m.

New Year's Day Open House—Wednesday, January 1, 2020 1:00—4:00 p.m.



2020 Ryumonji Work Days

Ryumonji work days begin at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. A pot luck lunch is served at noon. Work days are a great sangha activity and support for Ryumonji. Below are the dates for 2019. Please join us if you can!

Jan 4	May 2	Sep 5
Feb 1	Jun 6	Oct 3
Mar 7	Jul 11	Nov 14
Apr 4	Aug 1	Dec 12

Please complete the Event Registration Form to register for events at www.ryumonji.org.