

All Beings Zen Sangha Spiritual Directors Report on March 21, 2026
prepared by Rev. Inryū Poncé-Barger, Sensei
(Previous report was on August 9th, 2025)

Meditation and Recovery Healing Circle continues on Sunday evenings - trained to facilitate are: Shinren Mark Stone, EiShin Mike Barreda, Betty Mooney and Inryū Ponce-Barger. Betty, EiShin and Shinren are now the primary people with Inryū filling in infrequently.

Baika (Buddhist Hymns with instruments) continues to meet twice per month on Tuesday early evenings. Zen'etsu and Seiryu Paula are the leads.

Four Dharma Tea on Tuesdays since the last report

Seiryu Paula - September 23, 2025 on “Valley Sounds, Mountain Colors: Introduction and Comments.

Glen Bradley - October 14, 2025 “Direct Experiencing and Gestalt Awareness Practice”

Nancy Garruba - Tuesday, October 21: book talk “The Vanishing of Rose B”

Shinren Mark Stone Tuesday, November 4: led a discussion on Eihei Dogen's teaching that every moment is a full expression of all existence, containing past, present, and future simultaneously.

Dharma Book Club

New: Kevin McCaman is stepping forward to co-lead the Dharma Book Club with Shoku Benevides. The group meets Jan-Aug 2025 monthly. Inryu will continue to provide support.

Since my last report these two books have been discussed
August 22 , 2025 -- The Years of Rice and Salt by Kim Stanley Robinson

Feb 23, 2026 — Kokoro by Natsume Soseki

Zen Sewing Class -

We have settled on most Sundays from 10am-12noon as being the best day and time for the majority of zen sewers to attend sewing class.

We helped two students of Zenju Eartlyn Manuel finish their Rakusu for November 2025 Jukai at Green Gulch Farm.

We continue to support Rev. Lien Shutt's student Yuh Wen Ling in sewing and completing her lay Rakusu for a 2026 Jukai in the Bay Area of San Francisco, CA.

Currently, 6 members of ABZS people are working on their blue lay Rakusu; David Simon, Norberto Gomez Jr., Mohammad Koubeissi, Noah Van Gilder, Nancy Garruba and Lewis May.

Lay Transmitted Teacher Jamie Howell who has asked Inryū to be the Preceptor for his student Marko Suvajdzic. He is a remote (FL) student and Ilaria Tassi has stepped forward to support the completion of his lay Rakusu.

We will be assisting Kanshin Robyn Ellenbogen as she starts her brown Rakusu and Okesa. She is a student of Kotatsu John Bailes.

Interest in a Zen and Body Work Affinity Group - Emyo Grace McClain led a well attended hybrid discussion about links between the Yogic Traditions and Zen. Shinren Mark Stone offered to co-lead a group with Esho. But since then it looks like Esho is headed to Korinji for a period of monastic practice.

New Priest Training 2026 Cohort.

Eishin Mike Barreda, Ilaria Tassi and Zen'etsu Clay Crowell are in this 2026 cohort of ABZS priests candidates who are interested in being ordained by Inryū Sensei. They will begin sewing their black Rakusu and Okesa in the coming months. We started the training in early March 2026 and will continue to meet monthly with the expectation of an early 2028 ceremony.

Doanyo Training and Scheduling - Our Ino (head of zendo practice) and the members of the Doanyo had a training meeting in October 2025. Quarterly hybrid training continues on March 21, 2026.

ABZS Leadership - Training

Our INO (head of the Zendo) completed 3 training courses that are supportive of ABZS. 1. First Aid & CPR 2. Medication Administration 3. Mental Health First Aid

ABZS Service on National BODs

Inryū Sensei stepped down from the Soto Zen Buddhist Association of America's Board of Directors after having served two 3 years terms to include a period as Secretary of the Organization.

Rev. Seido David Sarpal was nominated and appointed to the Soto Zen Buddhist Association of American's Board of Directors and is serving as Treasurer during his first term.

Suzuki Roshi Branching Streams Advisory Board. Inryu Sensei Continues to serve on this panel.

New sangha members outreach- Shinren (via website portal/email and Seiryu in person Zendo) are first contacts with people reaching out about joining the practice for the first time. Seiryu is the primary greeter for Thursday night practice.

ABZS Dharma Movie Nights - Friday, October 17: Dharma Movie Night 7pm: "Wendy", Friday, November 7: "Amongst the White Clouds", Friday, December 19 7pm: "Flow"

Baikaryu Eisanka - Japanese Plum Blossom Style Hymns with bells. in person only Tuesdays - 1st and 3rd monthly 6-7pm - is continuing.



Branching Streams Conference September 15-18 2025
Shoryū , Seiryu and Inryū were on the planning committee.
Location: Loyola University's Retreat and Ecology Center, Woodstock, IL
We have 3 people attending: MK Abadoo, Seiryu Paula Chiplus and Inryū Sensei. Shoryu had planned to attend but had to step back for personal reasons.

October 23-26, 2025 - Annual U.S. Soto Zen Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii Seiryu, Zen'etsu and Inryu represented ABZS. We also made contacts at Daifukuji and Taishoji Soto Missions on the big Island of Hawaii



January, 2026 - Speaker Rev. Paula Lazarz was our in person speaker in the zendo on a Thursday Night. We hosted her for a week in the library space.

January 20-27, 2026 - Rev. Inryu responded to a call for clergy to come to Minneapolis, MN for a 700 person multi-faith gathering. She learned about the impact of DHS policy in the Twin Cities and what the faith communities there are doing to respond to the basic needs of people impacted by those policies.



February 4, 2026 - Inryū Sensei was one of three preceptors for a Priest Ordination of Kodo Jesse Peters at the Dassanāya Buddhist Community



February 11, 2026 ABZS Sangha Members gathered for a pilgrimage walk from Adams Morgan/Farragut North to the Tidal Basin to great the Peace Monks.



Ongoing Projects

Ongoing effort to document Dairyu's Sumi paintings and books. Esho Beth Milligan and I will resume this effort in the coming weeks.

Follow-up— Kaz Tanahashi has suggested we publish a folio of Dairyu's art that Kaz would write a forward for. He said we would need to obtain a publisher as a next step. Seido, Alan Brenner and Inryū have been in discussions and could form the nucleus of a committee should we decide to invest more time and resources on the idea.

Calendar was published and mailed to donors and friends of the sangha numbering near 180 people. Inryū did a original Year of the Fire Horse Calligraphy for each person.

Activities & Retreats Past quarter

We had a very successful 2025 Fall Ango (Practice Period) September 11 – December 21



Theme: Dogen Zenji's "Valley Sounds, Mountain Colors" fascicle
Keisei Sanshoku 谿声山色

Inryu Ponce-Barger served as Practice Leader
Zen'etsu Clay Crowell served as Shuso
Marcella Wolfe served as Benji



Some highlights include:

Foraging Workshop, Guest Speaker Sven Andes in our All Beings Zen Library which included a meal of foraged mushroom items.

Forest Bathing led by Zen’etsu Clay – Rock Creek Park

Sejiki Ceremony led by Rev. Seidō David Sarpal

Book Swap in the Library Building backyard - organized by Inryū



Book Talk, Guest Speaker Shodo Spring on “Open Reality: Meeting the Polycrisis Together With All Beings”.

2 day/2 night retreat Paw Paw Zendo - West Virginia



Half Day Retreat at Blue Ridge Farm - Upperville VA

Seven Day Rohatsu Sesshin - Urban Zendo

End of Ango December 21: Shuso Hossen Ceremony

Spring/Summer Looking ahead in 2026

May 23-25, 2026 — Memorial Weekend 3 day event to include:

Jukai Ceremony May 23, 2026

Guest Speaker - Rev. Tova Green May 24, 2026

June 3-7 — Gen X Buddhist Teachers Conference in VA

August 5-9 — Tassajara Sangha Week

September 23-26— Soto Zen Buddhist Conference in PA

