

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



**HOLLOW BONES**

**2021**

# Message from the Executive Director, Reishin Denise Leong

Dearest Sangha,

Over twenty years ago, I stumbled into the Hollow Bones Zen sangha suffering with overwhelming grief. What I found was a safe place, kindhearted teachers, teachings that made sense. I was offered the freedom to explore, learn, fail, and grow in my own way and in my own time. It has been a wonderful, albeit bumpy, journey, and I am forever grateful for what this practice has given me - clarity, courage, freedom, resolve, joy, compassion, resilience, community.

Over these last years, I have witnessed many others who have found refuge from this weary world by attending our sits, retreats, classes, programs – finding relief from their suffering through practice and beautiful connections with sangha. As I observed people ponder the teachings, I sensed a softening and opening, a transformation as they discovered ways to live this Dharma with support from sangha mates and teachers.

Another amazing journey - one heart, one mind.

In these difficult times, we need compassionate beings, people who can be the peace we need in this world. Hollow Bones Zen will continue its mission to create a harmonious world by helping our sangha realize their true nature and interconnection to all beings, and with loving kindness, work diligently together to alleviate suffering. Having seen the benefits and joy of our practice again and again, I am committed to Hollow Bones Zen and will “follow forever.” I hope you will continue to walk this path with me!

As the Executive Director for the past year, I have seen firsthand that we do need money to keep the candles burning and the doors open. If you have found any value in the practice opportunities we offer or your connection with sangha, please consider donating so that we may continue to hold space and support all beings. Our path of wisdom and compassion is needed more than ever.

Eternally grateful for your presence and support.

Gassho,

Reishin Denise Leong



# Programs

*offered regularly*

HBZ provides a range of online programs that anyone can attend at no cost. Most of our local sanghas live stream their in-person services, and our Virtual Zendo is open every weekday! Our new Recovery Dharma support group meets every Thursday, and the option for Mondo Facilitation is always open to anyone.

<b>Virtual Zendo</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Recovery Dharma</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Sunday Sangha</b> <i>began in October</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>Maranasati Meditation</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Mondo Zen Facilitation</b>	<b>11</b>

*Total Attendees*

**104**

# Retreats

*offered annually*

We offer meditation retreats throughout the year in-person and online, enabling sangha members to plan seasonal concentrated practice. Our in-person retreats are hosted by Zen centers and other spiritual community facilities that allow for dedicated time spent in silence, with time for nature walks, and group meals. These Zen retreats also offer excellent opportunities for beginners to deepen their practice and learn alongside experienced community members.

<b>Mondo Zen</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Jun Po Memorial</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Return to the Roots</b> (Dai Bosatsu)	<b>13</b>
<b>Women-Led</b> (Being Human)	<b>18</b>
<b>Rohatsu</b>	<b>27</b>

*Total Attendees*

**119**

# Classes

*offered annually*

Through reading and discussions with teachers, sangha members can create an intellectual and conceptual foundation of the practice, as well as develop a rich background in history and acquaintance with our Zen ancestors.

Intro to Zen	12
Intro to Mondo <i>began in November</i>	2
Sutra Book Study	10
Precepts Study	19
Five Training Elements	11
Zen and Facing Death	15
<i>Total Attendees</i>	<b>69</b>

# Scholarships *given in 2025*

Your donations allow us to offer scholarships for our retreats, to make in-person practice accessible to sangha members with limited income.

*12 Recipients in 2025*

Total amount	<b>\$5065</b>
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# Ceremonies

Swaha!

May your work in the world be of benefit to all beings.

**Zhenrén Wú Wèi Timothy Batdorf** was ordained as a priest at our Mondo retreat this year.

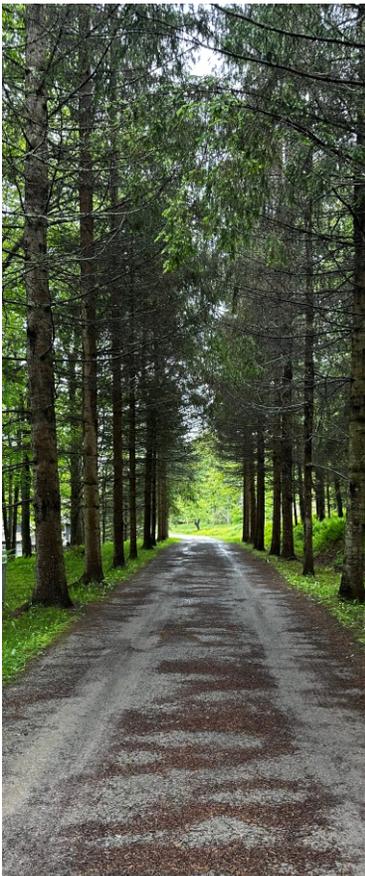
These sangha members received jukai at Rohatsu: **Kango Chad Brito, Ko Ryu Allison Willman, Mui Jin Lynn Orlando, Tenshin Chris Jones, Din Gyo Carrie Field**

# Our Website

online 24/7

Hollowboneszen.org makes it possible for anyone in the world to access our resources anytime! Our website offers an extensive collection of instructional materials, monthly teachings, video archives, and other resources for Zen practitioners. Our web traffic has steadily increased since we began active online outreach in 2020, with additional steps taken this year to optimize content so search engines can more readily find us and offer our services to folks searching for Zen teachings and meditation instruction.

	2025 Total	Monthly Average
<b>Total Visitors</b>	<b>13,100</b>	<b>1100</b>
Visitors who returned more than once	<b>784</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Library Users</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>49</b>
Visitors curious about Mondo	<b>1036</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Newsletter Subscribers</b>	<b>1622</b>	<b>700</b> active readers



## Current Maintenance Requirements

- \$2,260– secure online payment apps and fees
- \$1,515– member database, email systems, and donor record-keeping software
- \$1,200– Zoom & Vimeo services
- \$940– website server, security systems, software, and copyright licensing fees

**Total online operating costs: \$5915**

- 100+ hours of monthly staff labor
- Monthly articles and teachings from HBZ priests

# Current Budget

This budget provides the minimum operating costs for our current level of services and represents over a year of administrative work to optimize our spending and cut unnecessary costs. Donations given to our annual budget go directly to funding scholarships for our retreats, sustaining our infrastructure, providing materials for students and teachers, and compensation for staff.

While we are not currently able to offer our staff what would be considered a “living wage” in most places, we do try to compensate them as much as we’re able to for the time, labor, and expertise they choose to dedicate to our sangha on a daily basis.

Retreats	<b>\$30,000</b>
Compensation	<b>\$39,600</b>
Software & IT	<b>\$5,500</b>
Insurance	<b>\$1,200</b>
Legal	<b>\$1,000</b>
Supplies & Materials	<b>\$1,200</b>
Miscellaneous	<b>\$4,000</b>

*Total 2025 Operating Budget* **\$82,500**

# Revenue

In 2025, we received \$24,400 from retreats and \$41,200 in donations for a total of \$65,600. This created a loss of -\$16,900. While we were able to maintain our base level programming and staff, we were not able to grow or adequately support our staff.



# Please Donate

A message from the Abbot  
Taiso Byran Bartow Roshi

Dear sangha,

Hollow Bones Zen continues to move forward and endeavors to provide a wide range of support to our sangha, including:

- Supporting those who lead our in-person and online groups
- Hosting daily opportunities for online practice
- Organizing in-person and online retreats for more intensive practice
- Offering in-depth study and practice programs
- Training priests

In support of our mission, we invite you to contribute to our annual fund drive. Currently, we operate on a modest budget of about \$82,500 a year, which comes through donations and program attendance fees.

We hope to sustain our current levels of operation, and to grow if possible. We understand that economic times are hard, so in honor of our precepts, we seek only what can be freely given within your means. We accept gifts of any size, one-time or monthly sustaining contributions, and all time/labor given freely. Please give what you can – we will use these gifts with care and frugality. Continuing your yearly contribution will help us maintain our current level of operations. If you have the means to give even a little bit more, you can help contribute to our gradual growth. If you are a new donor, we invite you to invest in this space of refuge.

May we all appreciate this gift of life and practice as we continue on this path together.

With deep gratitude,

-Taiso

Donate online at  
[hollowboneszen.org/contribute](https://hollowboneszen.org/contribute)

Mail checks to:  
**Friends of Zen, Inc.**  
**2989 W. Spencer St.**  
**Appleton, WI 54914**

Scan to donate:

