

Chapel Hill Zen Center

Membership Information



Members are extremely important to our Zen community, our Sangha. While no one needs to formally join the Chapel Hill Zen Center in order to share in our zendo practice, CHZC is only able to exist through contributions of time and money by committed supporters. Membership pledges are the cornerstone of the budget and make it possible for the Board to plan and for the Treasurer to pay the bills. CHZC offers three kinds of membership to people who wish to be more involved in the Sangha.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP is for those who want to support the center at the most basic level. The term “support” here is understood to mean any kind of contribution which promotes the continued functioning and well-being of the center. This contribution can be either in the form of activity (time and energy) or money. Anyone, regardless of where they live or how often they are able to come to the zendo, can become a General Member by filling out the membership form (see back). The Newsletter is sent to General Members to help them keep in touch with the Center’s activities. Frequently, a person who is new to the Center, and has not yet decided how involved he or she wishes to be, becomes a General Member.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERSHIP is more formal in nature because the person requesting membership makes a certain minimum level of commitment. For instance, Participating Members are asked to attend regularly for three months before applying. They have a private meeting with the Abbess or Vice Abbess to introduce themselves and discuss their meditation practice, they make a membership pledge, and they help maintain our building and services. The suggested monthly donation is \$75, but this is only a suggestion. The actual pledge is determined by each individual’s personal circumstances. Participating Members are those who want to assume more responsibility for sustaining and nurturing the practice on a regular, week-to-week, basis by doing things such as ringing bells for service, leading the chanting, cleaning, providing flowers for the altar, making tea, bringing refreshments, etc. Participating Members receive discounts on meditation retreats and workshops sponsored by the center and may borrow Buddhist books from the Member’s Library.

Participating Members also play a legal role. In accordance with CHZC’s bylaws and articles of incorporation, Participating Members both elect and serve on the Board of Directors. Periodically, other issues come before the membership for a vote, and Participating Members are kept informed through mailings about questions of special importance. In short, these members help create the future of CHZC by their voting choices. Participating Members are eligible for election to the Board of Directors after nine months’ membership.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP is designed for those who have practiced at the center, and have a practice relationship with one of the teachers, Josho Pat Phelan, Zenki Kathleen Batson or Jakuko Mo Ferrell, but who, for whatever reason, do not participate in the business of the center. Sustaining Membership may be appropriate for those who attend all-day sittings, or other practice events, but live out of town, as well as for those who were Participating Members but have moved out of the area and continue to have a teaching relationship with one of the teachers. Sustaining members make a membership pledge, receive the Newsletter, and get a discount on meditation retreats and workshops sponsored by the Center. They may also borrow Buddhist books from the Members' Library.

The Chapel Hill Zen Center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; contributions to the Center are tax deductible.

CHAPEL HILL ZEN CENTER MEMBERSHIP & PLEDGE FORM

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Yes No The information above may be included in a printed Sangha List intended for members. Please note any exceptions:

I would like to be a Participating Member General Member Sustaining Member

I want to pledge \$_____ per month \$_____ per year

Have you met with the Abbess or Vice Abbess to discuss your practice? Yes No

Chapel Hill Zen Center, P.O. Box 16302, Chapel Hill, NC 27516 (919) 967-0861