

JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. I Issue 6

Ways to learn, study, practice and connect

August 2026

TEACHINGS



Demo Rinpoche recently shared wisdom from a compilation of Buddha's teachings and invited us to reflect on the meaning, quality and impact of our friendships. Drawing on verses from the Buddha, he suggested that we rethink what makes a true friend. A harmful friend is not simply someone who forgets an invitation or disappoints us. Rather, it is someone whose words and actions gradually pull us away from kindness, honesty, and wisdom. A good friend encourages learning, integrity, compassion, and ethical living. Through their example, they help us grow into better human beings. Likewise, each of us has the opportunity to become that kind of spiritual friend, supporting others with patience, encouragement, and genuine care.

At the same time, lasting transformation begins within. Therefore, it is important to be aware of our own expectations and not be overwhelmed by them. Rinpoche compared the mind to an untrained horse—restless, impulsive, and easily led astray. Dharma practice is a lifelong process of gently training the mind through mindfulness, reflection, and compassion. Rinpoche emphasized that true practice is found in ordinary moments: speaking kindly instead of criticizing, choosing patience over anger, celebrating another's success rather than feeling jealousy, and extending care to all living beings.

Daily practice provides a steady foundation for this transformation. Whether through meditation, prayer, or simply taking a few quiet minutes each morning to set the intention to reduce harm and benefit others; these small acts gradually become habits that shape our character. Rather than reacting to life with expectation or frustration, we learn to respond with wisdom and a warm heart.

Ultimately, the Dharma is lived not only on the meditation cushion but in every relationship and every choice we make. By cultivating a disciplined mind, a compassionate heart, and supportive friendships, we strengthen both our own path and the wellbeing of the others in our community and society.

NEWS & UPDATES

Programs & Events

- Demo Rinpoche concluded his Thursday evening teaching series on The Bodhisattva's Way of Life, emphasizing concentration and meditation.
- The monthly Lama Chopa and Tsogh ceremony occurred on July 24th during our summer retreat. The subsequent offering is scheduled for Saturday, August 22nd.



- Weekly Sunday programs with White Tara guided meditation, Demo Rinpoche's Sunday talks, and facilitated discussion of Rinpoche's Sunday talks continue to generate enthusiastic participation.
- The July 20-26 joyful summer retreat was on the Six Preliminary Practices in Preparation for Lam Rim Meditation. It attracted a full house on-site and many online attendees. It was a pleasure to welcome both familiar and new faces.



Every day, our beloved Demo Rinpoche guided us in deeply connecting with our present reality, fostering genuine compassion and wisdom to benefit ourselves, one another, and the communities we cherish.

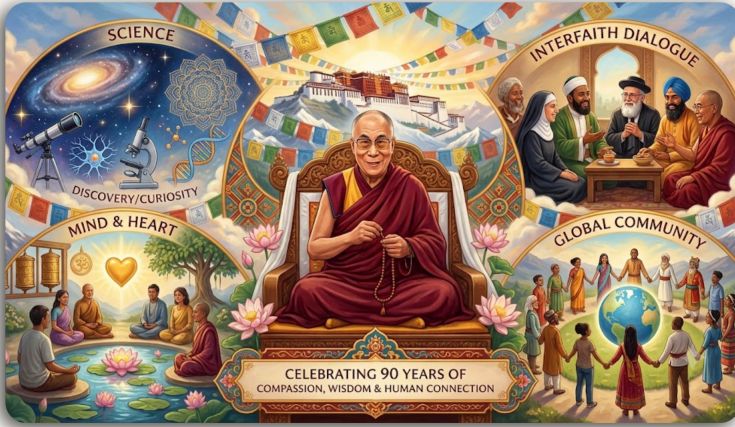


Concluding the Summer Retreat, Rinpoche offered a Bodhisattva Vow Ceremony. A potluck lunch followed.

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Special News

On **Sunday, July 5th**, we celebrated **His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday** with a dedicated talk by Demo Rinpoche.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday is unique because Tibetan culture traditionally does not emphasize individual birthdays, instead marking age collectively at Losar, the Tibetan New Year. His Holiness' birthday is celebrated because of his extraordinary contributions to humanity. Since the age of sixteen, he has dedicated his life to promoting compassion, non-violence, and peaceful dialogue, guiding people through wisdom and selfless service despite immense personal hardship. His Holiness has played a pivotal role in preserving Tibetan Buddhism, its teachings, and the Tibetan language during periods of political upheaval, ensuring that these precious traditions continue to flourish. He has also inspired and empowered the global spread of the Dharma by supporting the establishment of Buddhist monasteries and Dharma centers around the world. Through his visits, teachings, and participation in the opening of many centers, he has encouraged communities to create spaces where authentic Buddhist teachings, meditation, and compassionate values could be practiced and shared across generations.

Beyond Buddhism, the Dalai Lama has dedicated much of his life to promoting interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding among different religious traditions. He emphasizes that while religions may have different philosophies and practices, they share common values of compassion, kindness, ethical conduct, and the desire to reduce suffering. His meetings and friendships with leaders of many faiths have helped build bridges of respect and cooperation in a divided world.

His Holiness has also made important contributions to the dialogue between Buddhism, science, and the study of the mind. Through engagement with neuroscientists, psychologists, and researchers, he has helped advance understanding of meditation, emotional balance, compassion, and human flourishing. His ideas have influenced positive psychology by emphasizing mindfulness, empathy, resilience, and the cultivation of inner qualities that support a meaningful life.

The Dalai Lama's message extends beyond religion: his vision of secular ethics and his belief that "kindness is my religion" encourage people everywhere to become wiser, more compassionate, and more responsible human beings. In this sense, we believe his legacy is not only the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist wisdom, but also the creation of a more peaceful,

interconnected, and compassionate world which requires heart and mind focused on hope and goodness in spite of the challenges facing us every day as a global human community.

Chapter News - Chicago

The Jewel Heart Chicago sangha enjoyed a delightful weekend with Demo Rinpoche on July 11 & 12. They toured the Art Institute of Chicago after a pleasant lunch around the courtyard fountain. An intricate, 100-foot long allegorical painting entitled *Paradise Lost* by Raqib Shaw provided plenty of symbolism to ponder together. The group admired a pocket-sized, carved and painted Lama Chopa Tree from Mongolia. Rinpoche also pointed out the stories on the huge Buddhist Votive Stele, from AD 551.

After viewing the sculpture, photography, and textiles, the group took a refreshment break on the rooftop. There, they were able to sit, discuss, and take in the lake, city, and park views. Later, they stopped for a photo in Millennium Park in front of Zac Landsberg's Reclining Liberty, (posed as reclining Buddha) while a few cooled their toes and enjoyed the sound of happy children playing in the Jaume Plensa fountain.



On Sunday morning, Rinpoche explained how we are our own savior. We are responsible for how we make decisions and live in the world. He taught on how practice, in many forms, makes a positive impact on our lives, now and in the future. Meditation can help us live purposefully and compassionately, cut our negative emotions and lead us out of suffering. He explained that reading and listening to Buddha's teachings are also meditations if we let them effect our minds. Rinpoche answered questions and gave a beautiful way to sharpen concentration by rhythmically chanting mantras with a nectar-receiving visualization.

The generous teaching was followed by a backyard picnic of Indian food, salads, fruits and desserts. Many thanks to all who organized the visit, brought delicious food and conversation to share. Thank you to Michael Hoffman & Patricia Bayerlein, Peter Williams & Carol Shuford for opening their homes for this joyful and stimulating visit.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The new online group practice started on July 17th.
- **Memorization Workshop with Muza Rinpoche:** Fridays, August 7, 14, 21, 28, 5:30 - 6:30 pm. About thirty sangha members joined first session in July to hear from Muza Rinpoche explain the methods utilized in monastic education and how we can integrate some of those into our practice. Muza Rinpoche is long time friend of Demo Rinpoche and has a Geshe degree from Drepung Monastery.
- **Guest speaker** Venerable Thubten Chodrön will be teaching an online seminar on August 22: Demystifying the Diamond Vehicle: 1:30 - 6:30 pm

ANN ARBOR SANGHA SNAPSHOT

- **The Ann Arbor Sangha Council** met on July 1. The **next meeting is scheduled for August 5th at 5:45 PM**. All are welcome to join and bring their enthusiasm, ideas, and presence to hear and contribute to the events in our community.
- We wished happy birthdays to our friends Heather McKenzie, Padma Ball, Sean Ike, Nicole Van Den Wildenberg and Joe Breault during July. Warmest wishes for health, happiness, and lasting joy to the Jewel Heart members and family celebrating birthdays in July!
- Weekly **meditation practice** continues every **Tuesday** onsite in Ann Arbor from **6-6:45 PM**. This regular event is **FREE**, no registration is required, and **all are welcome to join**.
- The Ann Arbor sangha had the distinct joy and honor of hosting the summer retreat, greatly enriched by the presence of our visiting sangha members. This joyful gathering, guided by the teachings of our beloved Demo Rinpoche, offered us a wonderful chance to deepen our practices and embrace our personal challenges as opportunities for growth. The insightful questions and unique perspectives of our new members inspired us and enhanced our understanding of karmic connections.
 - We are profoundly grateful to all participants for their heartfelt contributions. Our dear Kevin Woods and David Lewis introduced a new app designed to assist new members in easily scheduling and managing cleaning tasks at the site, receiving wonderful feedback in the process. Moreover, our garden flourished with the caring touch of sangha members from Texas and local sangha, while a local sangha member opened their beautiful garden for picnic-luncheon. Sangha friends from New York provided valuable guidance for novice Disc Golf enthusiasts. The talent show showcased creative contributions, complemented by a delightful potluck lunch. We embraced the joy of preparing flower garlands for the Bodhisattva ceremony!
 - As a sangha, we are profoundly grateful for our onsite staff: Hartmut Sagolia, Kathy Laritz, and Debbie Burr. Their warm-hearted, humble, and caring leadership ensured a seamless retreat experience for many members, some of whom were meeting for the first time. We also appreciate our Zoom team for making teachings accessible online, along with discussion facilitators and bookstore manager Ujjen for their supportive and welcoming presence.

Upcoming Social Events

- **Sunday Brunch** will take place on **August 2!** Please consider donating a dish. Include ingredients.
- **Free Film and Discussion - Friday, August 14** at 7:00pm White Bird (2023) at Jewel Heart Ann Arbor.
- **Dharma Disc'ers Disc Golf - Sunday, August 23** 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at Mary Beth Doyle Park.
- **Happy Hikers - August 15:** 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM at Nichols Arboretum, Ann Arbor. Meet at Peony Gardens.



ART WINDOW

Our Dharma Treasures by Alison Rich

Alison Rich earned a BFA at Rhode Island School of Design, then trained as a botanical illustrator and worked with scientists at the NY Botanical Garden. She has been a Dharma practitioner for around forty years, taking part in many Jewel Heart retreats in Michigan and at Garrison Institute. A longtime member of Jewel Heart NY, she has lived in Ann Arbor for ten years.



VOLUNTEER EDITORIAL TEAM

Staff: Mark Magill, Hartmut Sagolia

Volunteers: Figen Lacin, Kellie Lindsay, Carol Shuford.

As always, we welcome our readers to share their work in the art window. Please feel free to reach out; we would be delighted to feature your artwork in our monthly newsletter.