

JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. I Issue 7

Ways to learn, study, practice and connect

September 2026

TEACHINGS



Demo Rinpoche took a break from live teachings in Ann Arbor during the month of August, which gave us the opportunity to revisit his online teachings from some of his earlier recordings.

What the World Cup Can Teach Us About Dharma

A soccer match may seem far removed from the Dharma, yet if we watch carefully, the field becomes a mirror of the human mind. Within ninety minutes, we can witness arrogance, fear, anger, pride, hope, disappointment, courage, humility, and joy. In this way, a sport can become a gentle teaching on how our emotions shape our lives.

Arrogance appears when a player refuses to trust a teammate, believing, "I can do this better myself." The result is often a lost opportunity. Life is similar. When we distrust others and insist on carrying everything ourselves, we may accomplish less, not more. Pride can also arise from a small success. We celebrate as though we have conquered the world, forgetting how quickly circumstances change. Overconfidence can itself become the cause of defeat.

Fear appears in many forms: fear of missing a goal, fear of being defeated, fear of losing our reputation. Such fear can prevent us from acting when action is needed. Hatred and aggression can also enter the game, transforming friendly competition into something resembling war. Yet the match remains a game. Remembering this boundary is itself a form of wisdom.

One of the most practical lessons we can learn from sport is the importance of accepting rules and outcomes. A referee may make a decision we dislike, yet the game continues. Competition does not have to destroy harmony when players respect the rules, their opponents, and one another. This is deeply relevant to our relationships. During an argument, we often stop discussing the original matter and begin bringing up yesterday, last year, or someone else's mistakes. We are no longer seeking truth. We are trying to win. Dharma invites us to notice this movement and return gently to what is actually happening in the present.

There is also a profound teaching in victory and loss. A team that loses while rejoicing in its effort may possess greater victory than a team that wins but remains burdened by expectation.

Happiness does not depend entirely on the final score. If we remember only one painful moment, we can make an entire life seem like a loss, forgetting the many moments of goodness that came before it. Ultimately, the World Cup reminds us of acceptance, respect, and inclusiveness. Different nations can stand together, follow the same rules, compete wholeheartedly, and still honor one another. Likewise, a community can contain disagreement without losing its humanity.

This is the spirit of Dharma: not to avoid challenges, but to meet them with awareness, humility, compassion, and wisdom. True victory is not always defeating another. Sometimes it is learning to participate fully, rejoice sincerely, accept loss gracefully, and remain connected to others. When we can do this, even a soccer field can become a place where the wisdom of interdependence reveals itself.

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 Saturday, August 22nd. The subsequent offering is scheduled for Monday, September 21st.
- 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.



- Fridays in August, the Memorization Workshop by Muza Rinpoche brought sangha members together to learn more and ask questions on the methods utilized in monastic education and how we can integrate some of those into our practice. Many thanks to Muza Rinpoche for guiding us with his wisdom and to everyone who sat with us to learn in community.
- Venerable Thubten Chodrön taught an online seminar on August 22 called "Demystifying the Diamond Vehicle." As western teacher and practitioner who worked closely with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, her insights and examples were quite helpful to those of us who grow up in western culture.

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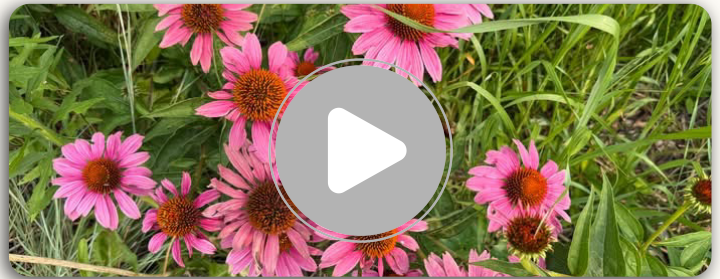
ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Beginning Wednesday, **September 9th**, beloved sangha members Hartmut Sagolla and Heather MacKenzie will facilitate a weekly course on the **Paths and Stages of Vajrayana**. These course offerings are **free**, and anyone is welcome to join. **Registration is required**. The link is available on the Jewel Heart website.

Tuesdays on September 1st and 8th join onsite mindfulness meditation with Figen Lacin and Joe Palm from 6-6:45 PM. This regular event is **free**, no registration is required, and all are welcome to join.

- On **Sunday, September 13th**, we will host a "**Welcome Sunday**" at Jewel Heart in Ann Arbor. All who are interested in learning more about Jewel Heart and Buddhist practices are encouraged to attend. It is the perfect time to meet Demo Rinpoche and other students. Lunch and sangha fellowship will follow the Sunday talk. Feel free to bring a dessert to share! We will have ice breakers and outdoor games: disc golf putting, bocce ball, and croquet.
- Thursdays, September 10th - November 5th, 5:45-6:45 PM: The Five Vayus, Practice for Energy and Vitality**. Join us for **Yoga**, led by Helen Breault, E-RYT 2000, onsite only in Ann Arbor! These yoga sessions include practice and discussion of the energy body through pranayama (breath awareness), asana and meditation. Experience how focus of breath, mind and asana work together to keep your energy free-flowing throughout your body. Leave feeling refreshed and revitalized. These sessions are offered for **free** and will complement your spiritual practices. **All levels of experience are welcome!** Drop in anytime or attend all sessions.

Take a walk through the Jewel Heart Garden



- Want to lend a hand?** Please help us care for our garden and center on **Saturday, September 12th from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**, followed by a potluck lunch.
- A heartfelt thank you to **Aimee Adams** and **John Madison** for organizing a fabulous community garage sale, and to all the wonderful volunteers and contributors who made it possible! From donating and setting up to selling and cleaning up, so many people pitched in. We couldn't have made it such a success without everyone's generous help. **What a wonderful contribution to Jewel Heart fundraising!**



ANN ARBOR SANGHA SNAPSHOT



- The Ann Arbor Sangha Council** met on August 5th. The **next meeting is scheduled for September 2nd 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. Pie making workshop by Susan on October 3rd and fermentation workshop by Rowena on October 18. Photo shared here is from our last Sangha Council meeting in August where so many upcoming social activities are planned we are very lucky.
- We wished **happy birthdays** to our friends Darren Sardiga, Debbie Burr, Megan Rotko during August. Warmest wishes for health, happiness, and lasting joy to the Jewel Heart members and family celebrating birthdays in September! Is it you? Let us know!

Upcoming Social Events

- Sunday Brunch** will take place on **September 6th!** Please consider donating a dish. Include ingredients.
- Dharma Disc'ers Disc Golf - Sunday, September 27th, 2:00 PM** to 4:00 PM at Mary Beth Doyle Park.
Contact: helenbpiano@gmail.com
- Happy Hikers - Saturday, September 19th: 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM** at Scio Woods Preserve, Scio Church Rd, Ann Arbor.
Contact: Jack Schramm at jgs91551@gmail.com.
- Open Mic** at Jewel Heart! **Sunday, September 20th** at 6:00 PM. Sign-up at 5:30 PM. All are welcome.
Email jonas@jewelheart.org with questions.



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Meet the Jewel Heart Staff

Hi, I'm **Kathy Laritz**, and I oversee the Program Development at Jewel Heart. Strong affinities for children and motherhood, as well as for spirituality and art, may have led me here! Attending college to become an early ed teacher, the curriculum was delightfully rich in religious and philosophical studies. I later shifted my major to art. After graduation, I joined SEMTA's graphic department in downtown Detroit, then motherhood arrived. I'm now mother to 3 and their spouses, and Gram to 8.

While running my own display business in the mid 80s, an unexpected blessing arrived - meeting Gelek Rinpoche. The next year, he proposed I assist him part-time and I eventually became his full-time assistant. Years later, when an opening arose in Programs, Rinpoche proposed I fill in and here I am - forever grateful!



Born and raised in Michigan, **Debbie Burr** has worn many hats over the years. After university and travel, her work experiences included roles as a magazine staff writer, print shop owner, music club manager, retail store manager, and finance manager. Debbie first connected with Jewel Heart in 1993, and Rinpoche hired her part time while Jewel Heart was preparing to host the Dalai Lama in the spring of 1994.



One thing led to another, and today her role as **Director of Administration and Operations** allows her to draw on her past experiences as she does her best to help keep the organization running smoothly. Debbie feels very fortunate that, for so many years, her work and spiritual practice have supported and enriched one another. She is also fortunate to have a wonderful daughter, Crystal, and to be a grandmother to Crystal's four precious children. Debbie would be glad to be of help whenever she can.



Ujjen Tsewang has dedicated his life to the study, practice, and service of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1983, he received his Acharya/Master's degree from the Tibetan University in Varanasi, India. Throughout his life, he has had the valuable opportunity to work closely with H.E. Kyabje Samdhong Rinpoche, H.E. Kyabje Gelek Rinpoche, and H.E. Demo Rinpoche at Jewel Heart.

Since 2000, Ujjen has served as the **Jewel Heart Store Manager**, supporting the organization and its sangha community. He also organizes Jewel Heart group pilgrimages to India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, and other destinations."

Hartmut Sagolla serves as the **Program Director** for Jewel Heart in Ann Arbor, Michigan, bringing over 40 years of dedicated study in Tibetan Buddhism. He met Gelek Rinpoche in 1984 as he was still living overseas. Later Hartmut lived in the Tibetan Buddhist Society in Australia for 15 years. He kept his connection with Gelek Rinpoche and decided to relocate to Michigan in 2002 to be close to his teacher.



Since joining the local headquarters, he has developed curriculum, supported retreats, and co-founded regional chapters. Today, he facilitates free weekly programs, including Healing and Compassion Meditation. He is Dharma Coordinator for the Bloomfield Hills Chapter

ART WINDOW



Photos from a sunrise on **Shi Shi Beach** taken by sangha member, **Kellie Lindsay**, during her recent 31-mile backpacking trip in the Olympic National Park.

"The sun doesn't wait for the clouds to clear. It rises anyway, and the light comes through whatever is in the way. Practice can work the same: not when we're ready, but simply because it's morning." -Kellie

VOLUNTEER EDITORIAL TEAM

Staff: Mark Magill, Hartmut Sagolla

Volunteers: Figen Lacin, Kellie Lindsay.

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.