JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. I Issue 9 **Ways to learn, study, practice and connect** November 2026

TEACHINGS



Finding Lasting Happiness Through Dharma Practice

Dharma practice offers us a beautiful opportunity to cultivate happiness in this life while gradually moving toward liberation and enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. At the heart of this journey is our motivation: rather than simply wishing for good health, a long life, or comfortable circumstances, we can aspire to use our precious time to develop wisdom, transform our minds, and benefit others.

While physical health, nourishing food, and comfortable surroundings can support our well-being, lasting happiness comes from understanding and caring for our minds. By honestly examining our fears, difficulties, and negative emotions, we can begin to understand the causes of our suffering and develop greater inner peace and confidence. Three fundamental Buddhist teachings can guide us on this path.

First, better ourselves to recognize the preciousness of human life. Our worth is not measured by wealth, appearance, possessions, or social status. Our human life is precious because we have the ability to reflect, meditate, cultivate wisdom, practice compassion, and transform our behavior. Remembering this potential can help us overcome discouragement and recognize the meaningful possibilities available to us, whatever our circumstances.

Second, better ourselves to understand impermanence. Everything changes: our health, relationships, possessions, and life circumstances. Rather than fearing change or clinging tightly to what we have, we can learn to meet life's challenges with greater acceptance and flexibility.

Remembering impermanence also encourages us to spend our time on what truly matters: inner growth, kindness, and meaningful connections.

Third, better ourselves to respect the law of karma. Our actions have consequences. When we act with kindness, avoid harming others, and take responsibility for our choices, we create the conditions for greater happiness and fewer difficulties. Each thoughtful action becomes an opportunity to nurture peace within ourselves and in our relationships.

Together, these three practices help us appreciate our lives, accept change, and act with greater wisdom and compassion.

Ultimately, Dharma practice is about more than temporary happiness. It is a gradual journey of releasing the negative emotions of attachment, and self-centeredness that give rise to suffering. By bringing these teachings into our everyday lives, we can cultivate deeper peace, give our lives greater meaning, and move steadily toward liberation and enlightenment for the benefit of all beings.

NEWS & UPDATES

Programs & Events

- In October, Demo Rinpoche continued his Thursday evening teaching series on The Bodhisattva's Way of Life: Maintain Concentration.
- The monthly Lama Chopa and Tsogh ceremony occurred on Wednesday, October 21st. The subsequent offering is scheduled for Thursday, November 19th.
- 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.
- On October 24th, on-site GOM meditation day at Jewel Heart Ann Arbor



- On October 6th on Wednesdays from 7:00-9:00 pm, H. E. Professor Samdhong Rinpoche gave a talk: the Old and New Kadampa Traditions and why it matters by the request of Demo Rinpoche.

In his talk, **H.E. Samdhong Rinpoche** explained what makes a Buddhist tradition authentic, meaningful, and relevant to our lives today. Rooted in the Buddha's teachings, the Kadampa tradition emphasizes not only understanding the Dharma intellectually but also putting it into practice in our everyday lives. A genuine tradition is preserved through an authentic source, an unbroken lineage of teachers, and teachings that can be examined through reason and logic. The talk is available to stream online, where you are invited to explore the history, origins, principles, treatises, and lineages within Kadampa tradition.

JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

- On Saturday, Oct. 17th, Dr. Joseph Loizzo concluded his online program, *Science, Spirituality, and the Art of Flourishing*.

- Online on October 24th, H.E. Dagyab Rinpoche taught the basis for Lojong practices, *The Bodhisattva's Jewel Garland*, with practical instructions for transforming one's way of thinking, speaking, and behaving for the benefit others. H. E. Dagyab Rinpoche kindly explained each stanzas and helped us understand how not to be trapped in our conceptuality. He emphasized that, as Atisha's teachings remind us, spiritual practice is not simply about rituals, prayers, or ceremonies; it is about cultivating a kind and humble heart. Even small acts, such as offering someone a cup of tea, greeting others warmly, or helping without expecting anything in return, can become meaningful Dharma practice when motivated by genuine kindness. It is available to stream at your convenience at the following link if you did not get a chance to listen this precious teaching yet!
https://www.jewelheart.org/events/2026-dagyab-rinpoche-bodhisattvas-jewel-garland/

- On Wednesday, October 21, 2026, Demo Rinpoche gave a wonderful talk for the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in Ann Arbor on "Buddhist Perspective on Community Well-being: Building a Compassionate Community." More than 60 people gathered to hear Rinpoche's reflections on compassion, Buddhist values, and how we can nurture caring and supportive communities.



Our heartfelt thanks and congratulations go to Jewel Heart member, Sally Haines, for organizing this special event. AAUW generously provided lunch, coffee, and snacks, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for everyone. Rinpoche also graciously offered a question-and-answer session, giving participants an opportunity to engage more deeply with the teachings.

Many thanks to Demo Rinpoche, Sally Haines, and the AAUW team who helped make this gathering so lively and accessible to many participants. May these teachings by dear Demo Rinpoche continue to inspire us to build and engage kinder, happier, and more compassionate communities.

Chapter News - New York

In October, Demo Rinpoche delivered a three-day program in New York. With his words, everything came together very well, and it was a meaningful time of practice and connection. We were fortunate to hold our workshop at Tibet House; a beautiful and welcoming space. The altar and everything else needed for practice are already there, creating a very supportive environment for meditation and retreat. It is especially nice to be able to arrive and begin practicing without the need to set up everything from scratch.



- On Friday, October 9th, Demo Rinpoche presented AI vs BI (Buddhist-intelligence) at Tibet House in New York City. What makes Buddhism special in an AI world? AI can gather knowledge, but it can not replace the wisdom. Technology can make us more capable, but only inner transformation can make us wiser, kinder, and truly beneficial for others. The talk is available to stream online.

- On Saturday, October 10th, sangha members gathered at Tibet House in New York City for a day of meditation with Demo Rinpoche. In the morning, Rinpoche gave a teaching on how to practice the Ganden Lha Ghema. He emphasized the importance of recognizing your motivation before practice; recommending that we let go of any worldly dharmas and generate authentic, virtuous intentions. Rinpoche explained the foundations of guru yoga practice and shared the special benefits of visualizing Tsongkhapa, especially when analyzing the Foundation of All Perfections. We concluded the morning with a guided practice of the Ganden Lha Ghema.

  That afternoon, Demo Rinpoche gave practical advice on how to carry the realizations we gain in meditations into our lives. Some of this includes writing down the problems and solutions that you identify during meditation and avoiding rumination about negative situations of the past. The audience engaged Rinpoche in a dialogue about how to process trauma and come to a place of forgiveness. Rinpoche emphasized attending primarily to the quality of thoughts in your own mindstream. The New York Sangha is so grateful for the opportunity to gather and receive these practical teachings from Demo Rinpoche!



- On Sunday, October 11 at Tibet House, our New York Sangha, friends and community had a beautifully wonderful opportunity to receive a White Tara initiation for healing and protection by our beloved Demo Rinpoche. He gave an extended explanation about motivation for empowerments and initiations; such as the motivation for doing longevity initiations: to live a long life because we want to practice Dharma. We want to make our life meaningful; worthwhile. Then, when we ask, "Why do I have to practice Dharma?" We should answer, "I want to practice Dharma for happiness." The goal of Dharma is the happiness and well-being of ourselves and our community.

JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Venerable Tokden Rinpoche is one of the senior lamas of the Tibetan Buddhist Gelug tradition. Born in 1944 in Kham, Tibet, he was recognized as a reincarnate lama at a young age and began his Buddhist education early. Rinpoche joined Drepung Loseling Monastery in Lhasa, where he received extensive training from renowned Tibetan masters, including teachings and empowerments from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Ling Rinpoche, and Trijang Rinpoche. Over the years, Rinpoche has served as abbot of Ratoe and Gyuto Monasteries and has taught extensively throughout the Himalayan region. In February 2025, he became the Drepung Tripa, the abbot and spiritual head of Drepung Monastery, including its Loseling and Gomang colleges.

We are deeply honored to **welcome Venerable Tokden Rinpoche in Ann Arbor** and look forward to receiving very special, authentic and valuable initiations and teachings from him

- **November 7 and 8th: Heruka Ghantapa 5 Deities Initiation**

The Heruka Ghantapa 5 Deities Initiation originates from the Indian Mahasiddha Ghantapa (Tibetan: Drilbupa). This initiation is restricted to those who have had, or are qualified to take, a highest yoga tantra initiation (also known as Maha Anuttara yoga tantra). Due to the restrictions, this event will be **onsite only** at Jewel Heart Ann Arbor. The only commitment will be the **Six Session Guru Yoga.**

- **November 9th: Heruka Body Mandala Initiation**

The Heruka Body Mandala Initiation is restricted to those who have had, or are qualified to take, a highest yoga tantra initiation (also known as Maha Anuttara yoga tantra). Due to the restrictions, this event will be **onsite only** at Jewel Heart Ann Arbor. Our current understanding is that the only commitment will be the **Six Session Guru Yoga**.

- **November 10 and 11th**: **Yamantaka Thirteen-Deity Initiation**

The Yamantaka Thirteen-Deity Initiation is restricted to those who have had, or are qualified to take, a highest yoga tantra initiation (also known as Maha Anuttara yoga tantra). This event will be **onsite only** at Jewel Heart Ann Arbor.

- **November 12, 14, and 16th: Six Yogas of Naropa** teachings

This event will be **onsite and online**.

- **November 15th: Manjushri-Avalokiteshvara–Vajrapani Initiation**

Please check the following link for the updates and final schedule: https://www.jewelheart.org/events/2026-tokden-rinpoche/

ANN ARBOR SANGHA SNAPSHOT



Celebrating World Animal Day

On Sunday, October 4, the Ann Arbor Sangha celebrated World Animal Day with a special animal blessing ceremony led by Demo Rinpoche.

On a beautiful fall day, sangha members gathered with their beloved animal companions—some joyfully running around, others taking in the gathering and happily enjoying treats. We also held in our hearts the beloved pets and animals who could not be present on this day.

It was a heartwarming opportunity to meet the furry friends who are part of our sangha members' lives and to come together in appreciation of all the animals with which we share the world. From a Dharma perspective, we offered prayers and blessings for their well-being and spiritual development.

Our heartfelt thanks to the planning and organizing committee—Helen Breault, Chance and Sarah Hiser, Kevin Woods, and Heather Tasker—as well as Jonas Berzanskis for sound support and Karla Velikan for leading the chanting.

It was a joyful and meaningful afternoon of compassion, connection, and gratitude for all our animal friends. As a community, $504 was raised and donated to two dedicated non-profit organizations: Bird Center of Michigan and Barn Sanctuary. We are thankful for all participants and contributers.










JEWEL HEART MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

- The weekly course on the **Paths and Stages of Vajrayana** will conclude on November 4th on Wednesday. Special thanks to Hartmuth Sagolia and Heather MacKenzie for facilitating the class.

- **On-site Ann Arbor, Tuesday Meditations** will be on November 3rd, 17th and 24th.

- Thursday, November 5th from 5:45-6:45 PM: **The Five Vayus, Practice for Energy and Vitality**.

- Happy Hikers closed the season on October 17th. We thank you Jack Schramm for organizing for us beautiful nature walks during this year!

- We wished **happy birthdays** to our friends , Jim Winter, Silvio Yamada, Aimee Adams during October. Warmest wishes for health, happiness, and lasting joy to the Jewel Heart members and family celebrating birthdays in November! Is your birthday coming up? Let us know!

- On October 18th, Rowena Villarias lead a **Fermentation workshop** as a fundraiser. We learned about fermentation and had fun! We even got a jar of healthy snacks to take home with us. Thank you, Rowena!





- On October 25th, The **Jewel Heart Dharma Discer's** celebrated their last meeting of the season with a great round of disc golf at Mary Beth Doyle Park and an after-party at a coffee house. Prior to the event, we raffled off a hand-painted disc at Jewel Heart. The lucky Brian Kobylarz won the raffle and took home the disc! Special thanks to Helen and Joe Breault for enthusiastically organizing for us a monthly fun, outdoor activity this year!





Upcoming Social Events

- **Sunday November 1st,** monthly **OPEN MIC@JEWEL HEART** 6:00-9:00pm. Sign-up is at 5:30pm. All are welcome to join a night full of music, poetry and story-telling. Come and express yourself! Or simply bring your kind presence to appreciate the performers.
- **Wednesday, November 4, 10:00am – 12:00pm –** Join us as we clean the center in preparation for H.E. Tokden Rinpoche's visit and other programs in Ann Arbor. It is a great opportunity to use some of that left-over spooky Halloween-candy energy.
- The Ann Arbor **Sangha Council** met on **October 7th**. The **next meeting** is scheduled for **November 4th at 5:45 PM**. All are welcome to join and bring their enthusiasm, ideas, and contribute to the events in our community.
- **Join the All-Ann-Arbor Sangha Meeting** on Sunday, November 22, 12:15 – 1:15pm! Enjoy bagels and share your ideas and questions with the Ann Arbor Sangha Council. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage as community.
- **November 20th,** you are all invited to join a watch party, A Relative Thing (2003) A sweet tale of family, love, and healing that everyone can understand.
- **November 22th**, after the Sunday Talk, Thanksgiving Pie Sale! Please consider donating baked goods and include ingredients and package if you can.

Many thanks to our Volunteers!



You might not be aware of all the volunteer work **Duncan Tyler** does for Jewel Heart Ann Arbor, but you will certainly recognize his kind, warm, and respectful presence. He helps in the bookstore, takes photos at events, records meeting notes, keeps the main hall sparkling, and so much more! A heartfelt thanks to Duncan for being so helpful and caring!



Our dear sangha friend and Jewel Heart volunteer, Arthur Wang (Peiyao), has moved to Alabama for an exciting new chapter! A composer, music technologist, and educator, Arthur is now an Assistant Professor of Music Technology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

We are deeply grateful for all that Arthur has contributed to our Jewel Heart community and will miss having him nearby. We wish him every happiness and success in his wonderful new journey!

ART WINDOW

Immeasurable Love for Animals
by Demo Rinpoche

I and all beings in infinite space,
Equally liking happiness and disliking unhappiness,
As much as I cherish myself,
May I cultivate love for all beings.

From ants to deer and bears,
All creatures seek a mouthful of food to live,
For the poor animals around me,
May I cultivate the mind of cherishing them.

By the power of love,
I pray that all pets, those friends of people,
Live happily, have virtuous minds and
May they find the right rebirth in the best realm.

By the combination all our virtue,
I pray that unprotected animals find protection and,
People's harmfulness toward animals disappears.
May the world be full of loving kindness.

VOLUNTEER EDITORIAL TEAM

Staff: Mark Magill, Hartmut Sagolla
Volunteers: Figen Lacin, Kellie Lindsay, Ujjen Bhuse, Kayla Kern
Photo Credits & thank you: Marco Garavaglia & many community members.

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.