



News from the Board (excerpt), 10/28/21

Circle of Care

Over 200 Afghani refugees will be settling in Western Massachusetts, assisted by Jewish Family Service and Catholic Charities. IWM is creating a Circle of Care for one of the families arriving soon from Afghanistan to support them in acclimating to their new community. If you are interested in getting involved, or just learning more, please fill out the form [here](#). We are gathering interested sangha members to organize a Circle.

Kalyana Mitta Groups (spiritual friendship & study groups)

Kalyana mitta means “spiritual friendship.” When his attendant Ānanda asked the Buddha how important friendship is to spiritual life, the Buddha answered, “This is the entire spiritual life, Ānanda, that is, good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship.” (SN 45:2) At IWM, we refer to these groups with the term Kalyana Mitta (KM), instead of calling them “Book Groups,” in order to emphasize the relational aspect of our commitment to learning together, and how we intend to use the books.

The following 3 KM groups are recently or currently forming:

- Group facilitated by Ruth Folchman and Melissa Tefft, with focus on Dharma and practice (*note: this group is currently full*)
 - Book: *Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Awakening*, by Joseph Goldstein
- Group facilitated by Ruth Folchman and Anne Fine, for WAD graduates
 - Book: *The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities* by Rhonda Magee
- Group facilitated by Lore Detenber, Cheryl Kiras, Hal Fales, for WAD graduates
 - Book: *Mindful of Race, Transforming Racism from the Inside Out* by Ruth King

Reopening

As many of you know, we had hoped to re-open the Center in September. Given the spread of the Delta variant, this turned out not to be feasible for us. We are

optimistic that health and safety considerations will allow us to offer some of our programs in person starting in the coming months. For now, all November offerings will be on Zoom. We're still exploring our capacity and comfort level for in-person offerings in December. We will continue to keep the sangha informed as our decision-making process unfolds.

Gratitude to Sangha Stewards

We offer a deep bow to:

- October Zoom hosts and outdoor retreat greeters (Catalina A., Lauren I., John M. & JM S.)
- Green Metta team who organized and watered the center's plants from July through September (Betsy H., Gary N., Diana R. & Andrea Z.)
- IT support - Adam C.
- Library - Candace C.
- New Finance Committee member - Jenny G.

We are so grateful to all who steward our sangha with their time and talents.

Financial Update/Matching Grant

The Board is pleased to report that through the generosity of members of our sangha, we have gone from a June 30th YTD deficit of almost \$9,000 to a September 30th YTD balance of \$2,248.

September 30, 2021
\$53,285 (income)
(\$50,877) (expenses)
\$2,248 balance

The above figures include the matching gifts processed through September 30th and \$5,000 of the \$15,000 challenge that was announced in July. In recent months, sangha members generously made individual matching donations ranging from \$10 to \$5,000 and new monthly gifts ranging from \$50 to \$375. Our sangha is coming together to meet the \$15,000 challenge and we will soon receive the remaining \$10,000; once processed, our balance will be that much stronger.

At the same time that we've turned a corner on this year's deficit, we want to name that the pandemic and Zoom fatigue have taken an especially hard toll on the dana the center receives related to courses, retreats, Dharma talks, and community practice. If we look back to September 30th of 2019, center dana from offerings was \$30,903. In comparison, this year it is down substantially -- \$17,004 as of September 30th.

This year we have offered fewer courses/retreats than we did in 2019; this is certainly a factor. That said, the amount of center dana received per individual offering is down as well. When we look at Dharma talks (which we offer weekly,

just as we did in 2019), this year, the 40% of dana the center receives is down by more than half from September 2019 (Sept 2019=\$4,387; Sept 2021=\$2,170).

While this is the first year that two households came together to give a \$15,000 matching grant, fifteen years ago in 2006, the center had another first. That September, “with great gratitude and faith in the mission and the community,” a sangha member made a \$9,000 gift to create a Teachers Support Endowment Fund. And the following year another member of the sangha gave \$1,000 toward that fund. Income from those endowment gifts has provided on-going support to teachers over the past 15 years. In 2020, soon after the pandemic started, the Board voted to guarantee \$150 minimum to Dharma talk teachers. The Teachers Support Endowment Fund contributes to our capacity to meet that commitment.

For the past eight years, from our modest quarters in Central Chambers to our current more spacious location in Eastworks, [IWM] has provided both a space for meditation practice and a direct connection to the teachings of the Buddha. For me, the Center has been a support and a refuge - a place to seek the teachings as well as a place to learn in relationship and practice with others.

- Excerpted from 2006 endowment gift letter

We are grateful to all who have contributed since the founding of the center. And we remain committed to ensuring that everyone is welcome at all of our offerings, regardless of ability to donate. No matter how small or how large, every contribution makes a difference; those who are able to donate more help make the Dhamma accessible to all.

As always, please feel free to contact us at leadership@insightpv.org with any responses, questions, or ideas.

With much care and metta,
trellis, Lucy, Hal, and Bernadine