



News from the Board, 12/20/21

Name Change Update

Last year, in the spirit of wise action, and in solidarity with the widespread awakening taking place around the US, the Board (which, at the time, included Tara Mulay as the Interim Guiding Teacher) engaged the sangha in a process which led to our new name: *Insight Meditation Community of Western Massachusetts Dhamma Dena, Inc.*

We undertook that process after considering what it is we were signaling as a community by including the word "Pioneer" in our name. Among other things, the word pioneer implies celebration of the colonization of this area by European settlers, often through acts of genocide and war.

As a sangha, we endeavor to live with compassion and lovingkindness for all beings. With these qualities in our hearts, and as the sangha aligns more fully with our collective aspirations of awakening, liberation, and true welcoming, we were eager to adopt a name that reflects our commitments. We've been using our new name for many months. And, now that we've made the necessary changes formally and legally, we will be bringing in the new year with a new URL and new email addresses.

Our new website URL — insightwma.org — is now up and running! If you have our old URL (insightpv.org) bookmarked, it's time to change it!

Although the traffic from our old URL has been redirected to insightwma.org — it's best just to use the new URL. We hear that some sangha members have been having trouble connecting through the old URL; and, for some of them, after a day or so, it worked fine. If you're still having trouble connecting, [click here for more information](#).

We hoped flipping the switch on our new URL would be seamless; apologies if that hasn't been the case for you. Please note these other changes as well:

- IWM will start sending emails from our new email address tomorrow: general@insightwma.org. Please add this address to your contacts to ensure you receive IWM emails.
- If you send emails to our old address, they will be redirected.

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- Checks may now be made out to Insight Western Mass.
 - Sangha Stewards — especially those who open the room in Zoom — please continue to use the same login information you have until further notice. More soon!
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Circle of Care

Our Circle of Care has come together quite nicely over the course of the last several weeks, and we have recently been given the opportunity to support a family as they resettle here from Afghanistan. The Circle is now connecting with the family through visits, bringing food and donations, and supporting the family as they settle here in Western Massachusetts. We look forward to additional opportunities, and welcome anyone interested in joining us.

IWM is collaborating with Jewish Family Services and Catholic Charities who are organizing Circles in support of over 200 Afghani refugees settling in Western Massachusetts. Lauren Isherwood is coordinating IWM's efforts. Please email general@insightwma.org if you would like to be part of supporting our Circle.

December 12th Town Hall

Many thanks to everyone who attended our December 12th Town Hall about dana, or generosity, and financial structures. A deep bow of gratitude to [Ruth Folchman](#) and [Lore Detenber](#), who have been co-stewarding this collective process to explore alternative sangha structures.

Prior to the Town Hall, Ruth and Lore shared these [quotes and article](#) as a starting point for our conversation about dana.

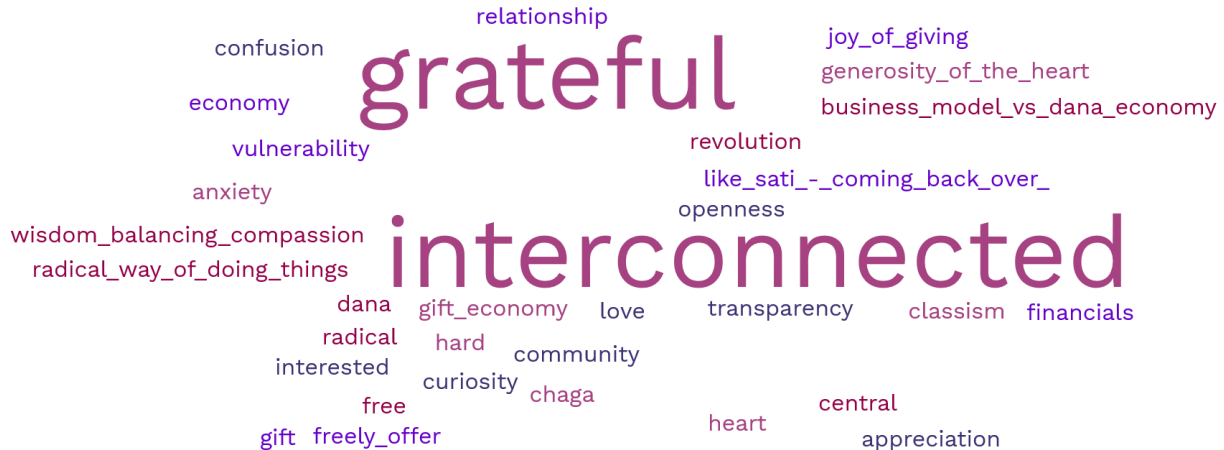
During the Town Hall, sangha members had a chance to hear from Rick Hart, Cathy Repetti, and Leslie Smith Frank as they shared their perspectives on their dana practice and on the article Ruth and Lore sent out in advance. Our thanks to each of them.

Ruth and Lore shared some inspiring and interesting examples of ways other sanghas communicate about dana (with a focus on financial dana -- not dana related to time). See the [Dana Communication slideshow](#) for more information.

We also had a chance for discussion in small groups. Our thanks to the note takers who submitted their breakout room notes. If you're a note taker who hasn't yet submitted your Town Hall notes, please send them to leadership@insightwma.org.

Sangha members had a chance to reflect and share words that resonated with them following their breakout conversations and the discussion amongst Rick, Cathy, and Leslie. (See the Word Cloud below, which was updated to include

words sangha members shared at the very end of the Town Hall. The two large words were mentioned multiple times.)



During the Town Hall, some asked for more information about IWM's finances. In the new year, we'll be sending an update about how we ended 2021, as well as a bigger picture that includes information about our restricted funds (Community Dharma Leaders Fund; BIPOC Fund) and our endowed funds (Teacher Support Fund). In recent months, we have been sharing financial snapshots on a quarterly basis through our newsletters.

- [Sept 30th update](#) (posted in our Oct 28th newsletter)
- [June 30th update](#) (posted in our July 30th newsletter)

(To see other "News from the Board" – click [here](#))

Stay tuned for information about IWM's next Town Hall, which will take place in February 2022, and will be focused on Inclusion and Belonging.

Mailing List Update

In an effort to streamline processes and communicate with the sangha more effectively, as of today, everyone will be added to the General (weekly) and Monthly email newsletter lists with the option to opt out. All of our affinity groups are currently on hiatus; when they resume, everyone will be given a chance to opt in or out of those targeted mailing lists.

- For some, who prefer less frequent communication, the "Monthly" list will be sufficient as it includes IWM's newsletter with updates from the Board and other sangha news as well as whatever we know about the upcoming month's dharma talks, courses, and retreats at the time we send it out.
- For some, who prefer regular communication -- the weekly updates with late additions to our schedule, occasional spotlights ahead of Wednesday's dharma talks, along with updates between newsletters -- will want to remain on both the "General" and the "Monthly" lists.

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- If you're happy to receive both the "Monthly" and the "General" email blasts, you're all set -- there's nothing you need to do. If you want to update your preferences, in the Constant Contact section at the very bottom of this email, you can click on **"update profile."** You'll then receive an email where you can submit your preferences. And, if you'd find it simpler, feel free to send us an email, and we'll be happy to make the update for you: general@insightwma.org.
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Gratitude



Although not a member of our ongoing staff, the Board wishes to extend a deep bow of gratitude to Jessye Joyce Chalmers, an IWM consultant who has been instrumental in ensuring that we begin the new year with our new name formally and legally in place, along with all that goes with that. Because of Jessye's project management skills, we've also utilized this moment to make some other important changes to how we do things behind the scenes. In addition to streamlining our mailing lists, as we retire our old name and our old email addresses, we're in the process of shifting our day-to-day operations to Google Workspace for Non-Profits. Jessye will continue to help us settle into these new systems early in the new year.

Generosity

Throughout the year, sangha stewards have given generously of their time, talents, and financial resources. This foundation of Buddhist practice, this living engaged practice of dana, helps us to fairly compensate our staff and keep our Zoom room open, phones working, and our space at Eastworks there awaiting our return. Sangha stewards have contributed gifts large and small -- some monthly, some in response to a matching grant, some on Giving Tuesday, and others whenever they could.

If you're inspired to give, we welcome your year-end generosity.

[Year-End Generosity](#)

Please feel free to contact the Board at our new email address - leadership@insightwma.org - with any comments, questions, or ideas.

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

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