

Zen Center

O F S A N D I E G O

ZCSD Newsletter

May-June 2026



Time for a Change

I had the good fortune to be a student of Joko Beck's for 23 years, from when she established the Zen Center of San Diego in 1983 until she left to live with family in Prescott, Arizona, in 2006. The Zen Center started out at 2047 Felspar Street in Pacific Beach, and it's still here now, as of this writing, but after 43 years we'll be moving to the Christ Lutheran Church about a mile to the west, in July.

I have a good feeling about our new venue and the people at the Church. I'm grateful for their welcome and look forward to practicing in the kind environment there, an environment that is about acceptance, working together, helping, growing.

But leaving Felspar is difficult. There's so much history and experience here—all the people over all the years, coming, going, practicing, changing. All the relationships. The work. The ups and the downs, the challenge of practice—and of life. The

buildings, the landscaping. The mats and cushions, the bells and candles, the smell of incense. The hot and the cold and the just right. Many fond memories.

So, there's sadness in this change, but life *is* change. And as zen practitioners, we've faced the challenge and constancy of change over the course of our practice. Maybe it's been difficult practice. But there's a good chance we've learned something that makes it a bit easier at times like this.

As a center, we've had some tough challenges over these 43 years, and I'd say we've faced them well and come through in good shape. The changing sangha has always impressed me favorably in its dedication, in its devotion, in its working together, and in persevering with the authentic, down-to-earth, effective practice that Joko insisted upon and guided us in, which we are all most grateful for.

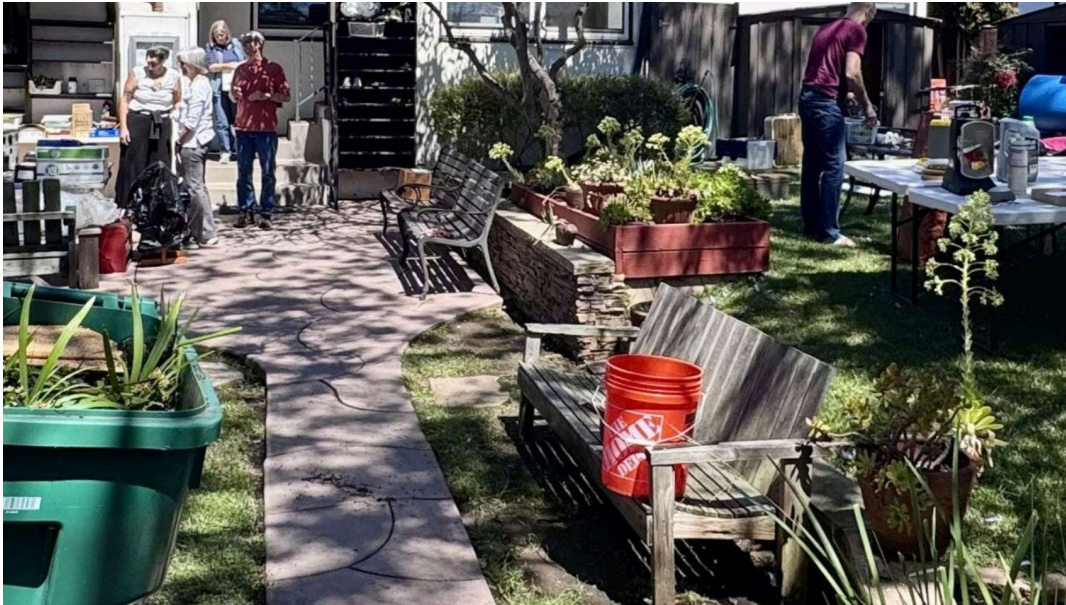
We hope you'll stay with us, visit us, and practice with us in the new location, or online.

—Chuck Sweet

This newsletter issue is going out two weeks later than usual, but not because we've been idle. Moving a zen center after several decades takes lots of planning and organizing and many hours of physical work.

This spring, our "relocation committee" did a wonderful job of scouting for places where we could continue to practice together, and following a sangha-wide meeting, our Board of Trustees voted in favor of the church Chuck mentions above. The Board has been managing the logistical steps and checking off small but essential tasks like changing our insurance policy and registering a new address.

The volunteer turnout on a recent workday was tremendous. Members cheerfully rolled up their sleeves and got down to emptying sheds and going through a ton of stuff that had been hiding in plain sight for years. A mound of linens went to people who are unhoused; surplus kitchen items were donated to Kitchens for Good; our practitioners found treasures to take home; a miscellany of household and garden items were given to Goodwill or left "on the alley" to be quickly snapped up; and, of course, we filled our trash and recycle barrels to the brim.



That was a good beginning. After our June sesshin, we started to give away furniture. A carload of cheap sleeping bags left over many years by sesshin participants went to those in need. More linens were let go. And so it continues... Volunteers show up when they can and work a few hours on this and that. Sorting through old files—what to shred and what to keep?—is an ongoing job. Each week, more things go on the picnic table as giveaways. And meanwhile, we're taking care to retain the items essential to the Center's functioning and history and planning how to store them.

It's work, but it's fun, too. Doing what's needed in a spirit of friendship and generosity. Discovering relics in dusty boxes stored in the attic. Learning more about the Center's earliest years. Lightening the lift. It's been a bonding experience for the sangha. And yes, there are wistful moments, but people are curious about the next adventure. We have until mid-July to complete the transition—and we'll need those weeks. But we're getting there, moment by moment, step by step, day by day.

We are planning two events to close out our time on Felspar Street:

On July 11, from 10:00 to 1:00 in the morning, there will be a "Farewell to Felspar" gathering in the zendo garden. Please join us if you can. We will have food and drinks, but if you'd like to bring a vegetarian or vegan dish to share, or a beverage, that would be most welcome. We hope current participants and old friends will take this opportunity to come together for a few hours in what has been a special place for so many.

During our last week before the move, the zendo will be open for sitting during extended hours. This will continue for several days, and participants and friends of the Center who would like to sit are invited to come. Specifics will be available nearer the time.

— *Myoku*



If we can accept things just the way they are, we're not going to be greatly upset by anything.

—*Joko Beck*



Special Events

Please join us for a "Farewell to Felspar" gathering on July 11, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. See the end of the article for more details.

During our last days at Felspar (toward mid-July), the zendo will be open for sitting during extended hours. Specifics to come nearer the time. All are welcome.

2026 Sesshin Dates

To be determined.

<https://www.zencentersandiego.org/schedule/sesshin.php>

Wednesday Programming

<https://www.zencentersandiego.org/>

The Sexual Misconduct Complaint
Procedure and Code of Ethical Conduct

for Teachers/Practice Leaders can be found on the ZCSD website under "Policies."

<http://www.zencentersandiego.org/Policies/>

"Life is change."