



LIVING ZEN

Providing a welcoming place and a nourishing community for the practice and study of Zen Buddhism

PSZC Sangha:

We've been monitoring developments at Rinzai-ji since November 2012, when we were informed about Joshu Sasaki's abuses of power. Thank you to all of you who have attended the sangha meetings we've held over the last year about this issue, and who've shared your thoughts with us.

We have decided to end PSZC's affiliation with Rinzai-ji. We sent this letter last week to Rinzai-ji's Board of Directors and its Administrative Abbots.

Please contact us with questions or comments-if you reply to this email your comments should reach all of us.

The PSZC Board of Directors

February 11, 2014
Administrative Abbots
Board of Directors
Rinzai-ji, Inc.
2505 S. Cimarron St
Los Angeles, CA 90018-2020

We, the board members of Puget Sound Zen Center, are tasked with upholding our Zen Center's mission and overseeing its governance. We are working to build a healthy and vibrant sangha, and to help Zen Buddhism become further established in America. We strive to be a community that is inclusive, and that models transparency, accountability, democratic governance, open discussion, and empowerment of sangha members.

In November 2012 when we were informed of Joshu Sasaki's abuses of power, we decided to work toward better integrating our core values into our operations as a Zen Center. In the last year, we've created a teacher contract for our Abbot, a teacher ethics policy, and a standing ethics committee. We are in the process of establishing a voting membership which will have the authority to approve board members and to hire and remove teachers.

We had hoped that Rinzai-ji, Inc. would reflect, grow, and change in response to the events involving Joshu Sasaki. We do not feel that this has happened. Rinzai-ji, Inc has not issued a statement condemning his behavior, and has not issued an apology for his behavior. Rinzai-ji Inc. has not removed him from a leadership position and continues to operate under his directives. It is unclear to us to whom he is accountable, and who has the authority to accomplish needed changes to the culture and management of Rinzai-ji, Inc.

Because of this lack of alignment with our values and our practices as a community, with a heavy heart, we choose to end our affiliation with Rinzai-ji Inc. This is a weighty decision for us. Several members of our sangha, including our Abbot, his wife, and our lay teacher, have studied and trained with Joshu Sasaki, and many in our sangha have been profoundly affected by his teachings.

We sincerely hope that the reach of Zen will continue to widen and embrace all those who seek refuge in its teachings in 21st century America. We dedicate our work as a sangha to this goal.

Sincerely,

The Puget Sound Zen Center Board of Directors

Christopher Ezzell, President
Beth Glennon, Secretary
Elizabeth Fitterer, Treasurer
Stephen Black, member-at-large
Steve Roache, member-at-large

Our mailing address is:
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