

NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER/HEARTLAND TEMPLE:

RESIDENCIES FOR PRIESTS AND PRIESTS-IN TRAINING

Nebraska Zen Center (NZC) is inviting Soto Zen priests-in-training to apply for a residency as a full-time priest for a period of four to six months. The position of Resident Priest-in-Training will be available starting in January 2024. NZC will continue to offer the position in the future on a rotating basis. The Resident Priest-in-Training (“Resident”) will live at Nebraska Zen Center free of charge and receive reasonable monthly compensation to be agreed upon based on range of duties, level of experience, and other relevant factors. In collaboration with the Interim Head Priest, the Resident will assume responsibility for maintaining the Zen Center schedule and supporting the spiritual practice of sangha members. The Resident will report to the NZC Board of Directors.

The residency will also be open to transmitted priests who are interested in a short-term assignment.

NZC will continue to seek a permanent, full-time resident priest. Any Resident who develops an interest in the permanent position will of course receive our sincere consideration.

ABOUT NEBRASKA ZEN CENTER:

Nebraska Zen Center/Heartland Temple is a Soto Zen Buddhist community and 501(c)(3) organization located in Omaha, Nebraska. NZC began in the early 1970s as Nebraska Zen Group, a sangha that formed around Brian Victoria, an Omaha native who spent many years in Japan and ordained there as a Soto Zen priest. Victoria connected the Omaha group with Dainin Katagiri Roshi, who in 1972 had established the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center (MZMC) in Minneapolis. Through Katagiri’s influence, Nebraska Zen Group became affiliated with MZMC. Katagiri Roshi established the Nebraska Zen Center as an independent entity in 1975. He and his dharma heirs and priests-in-training, including Rev. Teijo Munnich, sustained NZC with frequent visits for many years. In 1991, Rev. Nonin Chowaney, one of Katagiri’s dharma heirs, became NZC’s first full-time resident abbot. He, with the assistance of his disciple, Rev. Kyoki Roberts, acquired our current property and founded the Heartland Temple here.

Nonin served as NZC’s head priest for 25 years. When he retired in 2016, Rev. Dosho Port succeeded as head priest until his departure in September 2021. Rev. Daishin McCabe currently serves as Interim Head Priest at NZC. Daishin lives in Ames, Iowa, where he leads the Zen Fields sangha. He attends NZC in person once a month and provides a wide range of supportive services to NZC.

NZC exists to offer Soto Zen Buddhist practice opportunities to anyone with a sincere interest in authentic Zen practice. We are a welcoming community dedicated to meditation, study, and the

cultivation of compassion and wisdom, open to people of all backgrounds regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or capabilities. We strive to be a refuge for open-hearted inquiry and awakening.

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Resident will ensure the availability of practice opportunities at Nebraska Zen Center. This will include maintaining the monthly and daily schedule of Zen Center activities; leading zazen; acting as doshi for ceremonies; leading sesshins, all-day sittings, and other practice activities; giving dharma talks and guiding dharma study groups; and supporting sangha members.

The Resident will work in partnership with the NZC board and sangha to enhance the organization's spiritual well-being, growth, and ethical conduct and ensure its stable and sustainable development.

The Resident will represent NZC in the community by reaching out to other community groups and institutions.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Resident's responsibilities may include those described below. The Resident will act under the guidance of NZC's Interim Priest, in consultation with the NZC Board of Directors, and in partnership with relevant sangha members. The Resident and the Interim Priest will work together to determine the appropriate allocation of responsibilities between them.

Practice development:

- ◆ Practice leadership: Facilitate practice activities including retreats, sesshins, practice periods, and weekly services; conduct liturgy and participate in the selection and training of sangha members taking on service roles; provide regular dharma talks and dharma study opportunities.
- ◆ Forms and Ritual: The temporary nature of a residency will require the Resident to adapt to the way we do things at NZC. However, there is room for dynamic collaboration in developing and instituting changes in or additions to NZC forms and ritual.
- ◆ Jukai: Assist the Interim Priest in working with sangha members who are preparing to receive the precepts. This will include helping with rakusu sewing, facilitating precept study, and training for the jukai ceremony.
- ◆ Practice environment: Take a lead role in ensuring that visitors and practitioners feel safe and welcome at NZC. Ensure that newcomers and sangha members have access to the information and supplies they need to sit zazen and participate in ceremonies, dharma studies, and sesshins.

Without a healthy practice environment, both physical and interpersonal, NZC cannot achieve its vision.

Administration:

- ◆ Organizational development: Work closely with NZC's Interim Priest as well as its board, committees, staff, and volunteers to ensure roles and relationships are clear and that resources necessary for healthy functioning are available.
- ◆ Communications: Help ensure that all NZC communications reflect the organization's goals and identity and are timely and accurate; support staff and volunteers in developing and disseminating communications.
- ◆ Community outreach: Represent NZC and the Soto Zen tradition in the community by participating in interfaith panels and organizations, being available for speaking engagements, attending pan-Buddhist events, and creating opportunities to introduce Zen to the wider community.

Board of Directors:

The Resident will serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the NZC Board of Directors and assist in identifying and encouraging appropriate Board candidates. The Resident may propose policies and procedures related to organizational development and administration for the Board to consider and may recommend amendments to governance documents as NZC's needs and activities change.

Review Process:

The Resident will participate in periodic reviews conducted by the Board and the Interim Priest to determine the Resident's effectiveness and identify areas that might need attention.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Candidates must meet the following basic requirements:

- ◆ Their teacher must refer them to NZC.
- ◆ They must be a Soto Zen Priest who meets or is in the process of meeting SZBA membership standards.
- ◆ They must be in good standing with their teacher and their sangha.

◆ They must have experience teaching and leading zazen, maintaining a practice schedule both personally and in community, conducting liturgy, caring for a sangha, teaching the dharma, and facilitating other practice activities within the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition.

In addition, we are looking for candidates with the following personal attributes:

- ◆ Natural ease with people
- ◆ Builds strong and engaged relationships
- ◆ Creates a positive environment
- ◆ Works well with others
- ◆ Maintains confidentiality
- ◆ Demonstrates appropriate leadership
- ◆ Self-motivated, completion-oriented, and resourceful
- ◆ Open-minded, flexible, and willing to work to fulfill responsibilities
- ◆ Approaches problem-solving with ease and optimism
- ◆ Deals with failure constructively and flexibly
- ◆ Makes thoughtful decisions in a timely manner
- ◆ Takes ownership of commitments and actions
- ◆ Pays attention to detail
- ◆ Comfortable confronting difficult situations
- ◆ Demonstrates compassion in interactions with practitioners

We value diversity and welcome applications from all persons regardless of difference. Our decision will be based solely on merit and qualifications.

Please submit your teacher's written referral along with your resume and/or questions via email to: teacher@nebraskazencenter.org.