



GAY BUDDHIST Fellowship

FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER

The gay buddhist
fellowship supports
buddhist practice and
the spiritual concerns of
the LGBTQIA+ community
and its allies in the
san Francisco Bay Area,
the united states and
throughout the world.
gbf's mission includes
offering the wisdom and
compassion of diverse
buddhist traditions, and
cultivating a social
environment that is
inclusive and caring.

Busyness

By Ryuko Laura Burges

Ryuko Laura Burges, a lay entrusted dharma teacher in the Soto Zen tradition, lectures and leads retreats at different practice centers in Northern California. A teacher of children for 35 years, she now mentors other teachers. Her children's book, *Monkeys in the Bodhi Tree*, will be published by Shambhala in 2022. Laura cofounded the Sangha in Recovery Program at the San Francisco Zen Center and is the abiding teacher at Lenox House Meditation Group in Oakland.

Thank you, and it's great to be with you all again. There's a lot of talk right now about getting back to normal. I hope when we get back to normal, we won't just pick up where we left off with our normal greed, hate, and delusion. But I think there is a little bit of light shining through the darkness we've all been through together, and I think it was historic that our president recently in his speech mentioned trans-youth and that he has their back. I mean, at the same time there are prejudicial laws, but I hope there will be lawsuits about those.

I think during the past year we've learned something about our profound interconnection with one another and with the entire planet, and what it feels like to pull back from our normal activities and take some time for silence, and solitude, and reflection. I don't know about you, but there are quite a few family events and social get-togethers that I've really loved having a good excuse to not attend. Maybe during this time you've gotten in touch with what's really important to you. I think for those of us who have a seeking nature, there have been many jewels in this time. One of the things that I'd like to state, as a vow or intention, is to not go back to the kind of addictive busyness that's so prevalent in our culture.

I want to share a Zen story with you from the 21st case of *The Book of Serenity*, translated by Thomas Cleary. This is one of those puzzling Zen koans that I was introduced to very early in my Buddhist practice. As Yunyan was sweeping the ground, Daowu said, "Too busy." Yunyan says, "You know, there is one who is not busy." This was one of those Zen stories that I heard years ago during my monastic training at Tassajara. One of the stories that once I heard it, even though it didn't make much sense to me at the time, it has continued to arise spontaneously like a flash in the midst of my modern life. Who is the one that Yunyan speaks of, the one who is not busy? Can we get in touch with that one, that one who is not busy?

These quirky Zen stories are there to help us in a way that's really beyond our intellectual understanding outside of our conventional concepts. This story tells me that in the midst of our busyness, we can sense within us this one who is not busy, this compassionate witness that's always with us if we can be quiet and still enough to hear it. Zen practice encourages us to merge with our activity, not in some lofty

idealistic way, but in our everyday lives. Yunyan is sweeping. This is a classic Zen activity. You'll often see brush strokes of a Zen monk sweeping. When we're completely immersed in our activity, there is no busyness. There's just sweeping. There's a kind of ease and joy that I found in monastic practice where we really focused on—there's a Zen phrase: "chopping wood carrying water,"—a kind of ease and joy in just entering right here and being aligned with our real life, which is nowhere if not here, right now.

This strange, disorienting era shutdown has given this teaching new meaning for me. During this time, I think many of us have had a chance to get a sense of elemental life, a chance to limit our exposure to the world, limiting social engagement. Maybe you've cleaned out that storage area you've been meaning to get around to, and finding joy in activities at home like cooking and being with those closest to us, things that at one time we might have enjoyed but let go of because of other commitments and

When we're completely immersed in our activity, there is no busyness.

responsibilities. Because this chronic busyness is such a part of our American culture, I think when we have this sense of being at one with our activity, there's a sense of a freedom from the bondage of self and a respite from the pressure of busyness. Sometimes we feel this pressure comes from outside of ourselves, but sometimes it's a pressure that we inflict on ourselves.

Before our self-imposed quarantine, many of us juggled work, social and family life, serving on committees and boards, shopping, trying to find a time to be a good citizen, community service, caring for young people or for the elderly, aging parents. There can be an addictive quality to this kind of busyness. I hope that as things start to open up, that we can remember to treasure quiet times and solitude and continue to examine our addiction to busyness as we become more busy again. I looked up addiction in the dictionary and the definition of addiction is pretty benign. The dictionary says: "to be addicted means to devote or give oneself habitually or compulsively." Well as a recovering alcoholic, I'd have to add that to be addicted is also to continue this giving over of oneself despite negative results. When we find ourselves doing something over and over again with negative results, we have to ask ourselves, "Why? What am I getting out of this behavior?"

So this phrase "to give of oneself": we want to give of ourselves to those we love, to our practice, to our community. But we all know that to give oneself to some kind of destructive obsession isn't healthy, and I think that busyness is practically a requirement in our American culture. If we aren't busy, who are we? I think we associate busyness with being productive, with being popular, and I really think it's dangerous to think that our self-worth as a human being depends on how productive we are. As a teacher, I was always multi-tasking, cutting out triangles while watching Netflix. I mean, I always had more work that I could fit into one day. So I'm al-

ways coming back to this practice of just doing one thing at a time. I think we can ask ourselves, "If we're being busy just to avoid being, just being, and what are the negative results of our compulsive busyness?"

I think a lot of us have noticed how the chronic use of cellphones has eroded our quality of life. I know when I finally broke down and got a cellphone, I said, "I'm just going to use this during emergencies." Then my definition of an emergency really changed very, very quickly. Cellphones take away from our attention to what we're doing right now and our attention to the person in front of us. When I started seeing parents at my school, walking down the hallway looking at their cellphones, I thought, "They're missing an opportunity to gaze at a child who is so hungry for attention."

We've all seen people at tables at restaurants where each person at the table is staring at their little screen. I think when we look carefully at busyness, we can see how it

makes us less careful, less patient, more irritable, more prone to anger. You see this when we're driving. If someone cuts us off, that's a huge affront to our sovereignty as a human being. Busyness can erode our integrity and edge us into a state of constant panic, dread, and stress. How do we translate the practice of non-busyness into everyday life as we get back into being more busy again? I think this is especially true for those of us in Buddhist practice who are transplanting an Eastern way of thinking and being into a Western culture where being busy is just part of American life.

I know many of you are familiar with the very refreshing teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese monk and peace activist. One of my favorite quotes of his is: "If we are peaceful, if we are happy, we can blossom like a flower and everyone in our family, our entire society will benefit from our peace." I think we might have this niggling thought, "Why should I have this intention towards happiness and peace when so much of the world is suffering?" But I think if we think in terms of cultivating peace and happiness within ourselves as an offering to the world, that's a very different thing. I think we can be subversive agents of peace right in the middle of our very crazy and busy society.

A student of Thich Nhat Hanh's who was his assistant for some time told me about walking down the streets of Manhattan with Thich Nhat Hanh who would walk very, very slowly. If you've been to Manhattan or you can imagine this constant flow of traffic on the sidewalk, I mean, Thich Nhat Hanh's walking *so* slowly engendered so much anger from other people on the sidewalk that, it caused so much attention, they might have well been stark naked walking down the street. Given the demands most of us face, we'll probably continue to be busy. But practice reminds us that even in the midst of our busyness, there is one who is not busy. The crazier our world gets, the more I treasure the simplicity, the refuge, seren-

ity and tranquility of meditation, a kind of oasis in the midst of a very busy world.

So, I want to consider some antidotes to our obsessive busyness, and I'm sure you have some as well. We could talk about them later. First as I just said, our meditation practice is an antidote to the habitual busyness that's so celebrated by our culture. It's really a revolutionary act to just sit still for half an hour and not do anything. And of course, when we're not doing anything, we're also not creating any mischief. The practice of sitting down in the midst of our life and simply being alive, feeling our breath as it rises and falls, feeling conscious contact with the place where we find ourselves. I think when we sit still like this, we notice this quiet witness within observing our breath. We can't do this until we consciously make a space for it in our lives, and I do hope that in addition to sitting with one another every Sunday that you've carved out a place for quiet sitting in your everyday life.

A second thing is we can come back to our breath during the day. We always have time for taking three deep breaths. You can do that at a meeting, at a stop light, and you can even choose something as a reminder. Whenever I hear a siren, I take three deep breaths because a siren means someone's in trouble, and I can send love and kindness to that person through my breath. We might not always have time to sit for long periods of time, but we always have time for three deep breaths. In fact, let's just take three deep breaths together right now.

We always have time for three deep breaths.

I wove this practice of taking three deep breaths into my classroom. The kids are kind of embarrassed and silly about it at first, and then they really love that silence. Many of them took those three deep breaths back home. Some of them got a mindfulness bell for their home and some of them would tell me, "You know, when my parents start fighting, I ring the bell and we take three deep breaths." That's being a revolutionary agent of change.

A third thing I think we can all do is to have the intention of cultivating a sense of spaciousness in our everyday life, even within a very busy day. During my busy days as a teacher when I'd have dozens of interactions with people every day, I would simply remind myself ... I would literally say this to myself internally, "I have all the time that I need. I have all the time that I need," and you can tell yourself this when you feel that edge creeping into your thinking.

A fourth thing is we can consciously walk more slowly during our day, maybe not as slowly as Thich Nhat Hanh, but to walk slowly enough so that we can see what's around us, meet each person and event wholeheartedly, and even I would suggest being conscious of

the way your feet feel on the ground. I try to walk in Golden Gate Park every day now, and I make an effort to get off the trail ... I mean, just get off the concrete and put my feet on the ground. I have a sense that it's important for our minds and bodies to have our feet on the ground, literally on the ground, more often than we let ourselves do that.

I think it's really dangerous to think that our self-worth as a human being depends on how productive we are.

A fifth thing is that we can leave a little earlier to get where we're going instead of rushing. Now, I was somebody who was chronically late in a very passive-aggressive way for much of my life. Someone told me—that this was so healing—that it's hard to be on time. It's hard to be exactly on time, but you can be a little bit early. It's easy to be early. This also increases our sense of having spaciousness in our lives if we do that for ourselves.

Six. We can build peaceful moments into our day. I am so tickled; I recently bought an 88 key Yamaha keyboard for myself. I haven't had a piano in my apartment so as not to aggravate my neighbors, but I used to be able to play the piano at my school. This keyboard, it feels and sounds exactly like a piano, but I have headphones. I'm not a great pianist, but I'm returning to all those simple piano songs from my childhood, and it's been so refreshing to return to piano, and also to drawing. I recently co-taught a class on Zen and drawing. When we look at something and try to draw it, even unskillfully, it really brings us back to the present moment. That's been a wonderful practice for me to return to.

Seven. Another thing we can do is schedule a day of doing nothing. This used to be called the Sabbath. You can make a Sabbath for yourself. Now, you really have to plan this. It can't happen by accident. You have to maybe turn off your phone, turn off your screens. You might nap a lot, or cook, or read, or stare out the window, play with your pets, take a walk in the park, a day of real rest for yourselves.

Eight. Exercising is another great way to come back to ourselves, not out of any sense of virtue or to have six-pack abs, but just to do something as sensual and pleasurable in itself.

Nine. One of my favorite things to do to increase a sense of ease is to be around trees. There's so much research coming out now about the intelligence of trees and how they communicate with one another under the ground and through the air. Well, it looks like they're doing absolutely nothing, but a tree is such a wonderful teacher of stability and generosity. They just grow where they're planted and give back so much shade, and fruit, and medicine, and most importantly, the air we breathe. We literally could not be on this planet without trees. Take a moment to look up at the trees when you walk, and that will increase your sense of peace and ease.

A tenth thing I'd like to share is to stop talking about how busy and stressed out we are. When somebody asks us how we are and we say, "Oh, I'm so busy. I'm just so stressed," every time we say that we deepen that neurological pathway in our brain. So when you feel tempted to say how busy and stressed out you are, take three breaths with your friend or say you have all the time that you need. We need to change that attitude of perpetual busyness.

I want to share with you this poem, which I think will help sustain me as I begin to return to normal life, whatever that is. This is by the wonderful gay Greek poet C.P. Cavafy. It's called "As Much As You Can."

And if you can't shape your life the way you want,
at least try as much as you can
not to cheapen it totally
by too much contact with the world,
and all its traffic and talk.

Don't degrade it by dragging it along,
taking it around and exposing it so often
to the daily silliness
of meetings and parties,
until it comes to seem unbearable,
no longer your own.

That's C.P. Cavafy. Wonderful, wonderful Greek poet.

Let's take three breaths together.

It's hard to be right on time, but it'd easy to be a little early.

Well, I have a little more I'd like to add before we have our discussion. I think a lot of us long for a simpler way of life and have had a taste of that during the shutdown. Part of this practice can be just remembering to return to the present moment, to just sweep when we're sweeping, and when we're cutting a carrot, just cutting a carrot—the simplicity of doing the next right thing, the thing that's right in front of us. My first Buddhist teacher told me that if you feel depressed, if you feel overwhelmed, do the dishes. In other words, just do something simple that's right in front of you that needs to be done that will improve your environment, a physical activity that will change the way you feel, even in a subtle way, and change our minds as well.

I notice a lot of people getting rid of excess things these days, rethinking their living space, and enjoying the simplicity of gardening, of reading, of home cooking. These are all things that invite us to slow down and enjoy our life more deeply, and to take a break from running around like crazy and thinking that our worth as a human being depends on how productive we are at every moment. We might have this sense, I sometimes do, just spending too much time in my head worrying about the future, worrying about people I care about, being discouraged about our country and the direction it sometimes seems to be going in, some of the things that have

come up to light, although that's the only way they can ever be improved.

Another antidote to this kind of mental busyness is just to turn towards the present moment and take care of what's right in front of us. Since I retired from teaching kids, I've been writing children's books for Shambhala Publishing, which has been such a nice way for me to be in touch with my love for children and what I've learned from being with them for half my life. I was with my daughter yesterday and when she was eight years old, that's the age of the kids that I taught, she was walking along a path at Tassajara. We used to go there during the summer, and I would cook for the guests during the summertime at Tassajara. The practice leader at Tassajara ran into Nova and said, "Hi Nova, how's it going?" She stopped and said, "So little time, so much to complain about." She was eight at the time. So, kids have always given me a laugh and helped me look a lot more closely at myself.

It was a challenge, and a koan, and a joy to write a book about Zen for children, which I titled "Tiger Zen Teacups: Zen Stories, Poems, and Practices for Kids and Their Families." I don't know if Shambhala will stick with that title. It's being illustrated by a wonderful Japanese American artist, and it won't be out for quite a while. But when I was invited to write this book, I thought at first it might not be a great idea because we don't indoctrinate kids into Buddhism. They don't meditate with us at the crack of dawn. We certainly don't expect them to take the Buddhist precepts or subscribe to some particular set of beliefs. But we do include kids in the silence at the beginning of meals, and they celebrate the changing seasons with us in the Buddha hall. Many of us have altars in our homes that kids participate with. They might find a beautiful leaf, or stone, or shell to put on the altar. We have photographs of loved ones who've died.

So, I just submitted my manuscript with stories that will appeal to kids with activities for them to do. One of the chapters is about taking care of things, and if you'll indulge me, I thought it might be kind of fun to share this with you as we think about our own obsessive busyness and the way we scatter our energy just spreading it all over the place with too much stuff and too much to worry about.

I'm sure some of you know the book *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*. It came out in the 50s. It was one of the very early books about Zen Buddhism that came to America. I'm retelling this classic story from that book for kids. This is what I say to kids at the beginning. An important part of Zen is learning how to take care of things. The things we use every day take good care of us, and we should take good care of them. A good cook takes care of his knives because he couldn't prepare food without their help. A good carpenter takes care of her tools because she couldn't build things without their help. See the gender change there? Cooks and carpenters keep their

knives and tools clean and put them back in the same place each time as they use them so they're there when they need them again. There's a saying in Zen: "Chop wood, carry water," which means everyday pay attention to what you're doing and take care of things.

In this story, a young monk enters the temple. This story's called "Wash Your Bowl." There was a young man who longed to enter the monastery so that he could practice Zen. He'd heard tales of the great Zen masters and he wanted to be just like them, to be able to sit still with a calm mind and to grow in his knowledge and compassion. He set off with just the clothes on his back and made his way up into the high mountains. The crooked path led him to a Zen temple, and he sat outside for three days facing a wall hoping that the master would notice him and let him practice there. On the evening of the third day, Master Joshu silently slid open the wooden door of the temple and invited the young monk to enter. It happened to be time for the evening meal, so the young man slipped off his shoes and put them neatly on the shoe rack, entered the Zendo, sat

It's really a revolutionary act to just sit still for half an hour and not do anything.

down, and silently ate a bowl of rice porridge with the other monks. When he was done, he approached the master and said, "I've just entered the monastery. Will you teach me?" Joshu answered, "Have you eaten your rice porridge?" The young monk answered, "Yes, master. I have eaten." Joshu said, "Then you had better wash your bowl." At that moment, the young monk was enlightened.

Thank you very much for your kind attention. I would really love to hear about what this line of thinking and speaking might have sparked in you. How do you find ease and joy in the midst of your necessary busyness? Of course, none of us would have hoped for this terrible global pandemic and all the loss and grief that it's caused. But is there something that you've learned or enjoyed during this time that might have surprised you, something that you want to say out loud to help you keep this intention of continuing with it as things begin to open up around us?

So whatever came up for you, or whatever you're practicing with right now in your life, it's helpful to say it out loud. Thank you again for your listening and I'd like to dedicate this talk today to a friend of mine whose suicide I am acknowledging.

A number of GBF members engaged with Laura about their experiences during this time and shared what has helped. In the interest of space, the following are the salient suggestions.

1. Using the \$600 covid check to buy a portable 88 key piano and loving playing it.
2. A heroic teacher remembering that "I have all the time I need" and remembering to take 3 breaths; getting his kids to draw animals together: 'that's when the hush falls over the room.'
3. Watching kids play.
4. Walking in the woods.
5. Walking a labyrinth.
6. Really looking for those moments to "incline the mind to Joy."
7. A nurse says: "These three large breaths actually increase your parasympathetic hormones and decrease your sympathetic hormones. When I'm on the phone, or even for myself when I'm taking these three breaths, I actually take the palm of my hand and put it on my heart. That actually stimulates not only your parasympathetics, but oxytocin secretion from your vagus nerve, which is the hormone that brings milk down from the breast, it's hugging a baby. Usually if a patient is very mad, like on the phone, I have them put their hand on their chest, take some deep breaths with me, and in about a minute it just knocks them out of whatever delusional state they may be in at that moment, so I just offer that out."
8. A university department head says "My wonderful faculty is almost competitive about how busy they are. I've been trying to introduce little lumps of clay into the works just to be embodied, to do something, where we use touch, or we think about our bodies and our breath just at the beginning of a meeting and maybe at the end. It's difficult work. It's missionary work."
9. A friend of mine told me when you lose your center, focus on what you're doing with your hands. One of my favorites is instead of high tea I have high coffee in late afternoon.
10. More from Laura: "When a child is really sobbing and upset, the best thing you can do is put your hand on their heart and breathe with them. I know that when people start doing hospice work, they think, 'Well, what can I say and do for this person who's dying?' And often just breathing with another person is an offering."
11. Again from Laura: "I understand that a good antidote to panic attacks is to look down at your feet on the ground, see yourself to look down at your feet. And also, to remind yourself ... Here's another great mantra: 'I'm all right, right now. Right now, I'm all right,' because so much of a panic attack or anxiety is future tripping."

Thanks again, Laura, and GBF members!



Board of Directors

Jeff Lindemood - President
 Jerry Jones - Vice President
 Grecia Haigwood - Secretary
 Cass Brayton - Treasurer
 Michael Altshuler
 Richard Azzolini
 Greg James

SUNDAY SITTINGS**Program Committee**

Jerry Jones
 Jeff Lindemood

Facilitator Coordinators

Jim Stewart
 Cass Brayton

Facilitators

Cass Brayton
 Joe Goode
 Grecia Haigwood
 Jeff Lindemood
 Jack Busby
 George Gibbs
 Michael Murphy
 Henry Rabinowitz
 Lee Robbins
 Jim Stewart

Host Coordinator

Cass Brayton

Hosts

Jon Anderson
 Richard Azzolini
 Cass Brayton
 Joe Castrovinci
 Jay Davidson
 Gary Dexter
 Clark Freshman
 George Gibbs
 Mark Hoffheimer
 Jerry Jones
 Don Kirchman
 Dave Limcaco
 Pat McGraw
 Matthew Perifano
 Jim Stewart

NEWSLETTER**Editor**

Jim Stewart

Design & Production

Jim Lengel

Mailing List

Joe Castrovinci

Newsletter Mailing

Jack Busby

Mail

Ray Dyer
 Grecia Haigwood

**LARKIN STREET YOUTH CENTER
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

Clint Seiter

WEBSITE

Henry Rabinowitz

Google/Facebook Moderator

Tom Bruein

Audio Engineer

George Hubbard

RETREAT COORDINATORS

Richard Azzolini
 Jerry Jones

All in-person Programs at GBF on Bartlett Street will be postponed indefinitely and are being offered online using Zoom Meetings. Visit our website at www.gaybuddhist.org for the Zoom link and password.

Sunday Sittings

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Every Sunday at 10:30 am we meditate together for 30 minutes, followed by a talk or discussion till 12:00 pm. Everyone is then welcome to stay and socialize until 12:30 pm.

Wednesday Night Live

7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Similar to the Sunday format, without a formal dharma talk, we host a wide range of discussions which can include creative spiritual inspirations, pitfalls on the path, and applications of practice in everyday life. You are welcome to attend the Meditation (7:30 pm to 8:00 pm) only, and/or the Discussion (8:00 pm to 9:00 pm).

Your Thrift Store Donations Earn Money for GBF

GBF members can donate their quality cast-offs to the Community Thrift Store (CTS) and GBF will receive a quarterly check based on the volume of items sold. This is a great way to support our Sangha, and the community. So far this year we have received over \$800 through members' generosity. Bring your extra clothing and other items to CTS at 623 Valencia St between 10am and 5pm, any day of the week. The donation door is around the corner on Sycamore Alley (parallel to and between 17th and 18th) between Valencia and Mission Tell the worker you are donating to GBF. Our ID number is 40. Information: (415) 861-4910

How to Reach Us

www.gaybuddhist.org

Mail correspondence:

GBF

**2261 Market Street, #456-A
 San Francisco, CA 94114**

To contact Gay Buddhist Fellowship with general questions, suggestions for speakers, address changes, or to subscribe or unsubscribe to the newsletter:

gaybuddhistfellowship@gmail.com

If you would like to join the GBF Google Group email list, please go to

<http://gaybuddhist.org/v3-wp/email-list/> for instructions.

Find us on Facebook [@gaybuddhistfellowship](https://www.facebook.com/gaybuddhistfellowship)

The Gay Buddhist Fellowship is a charitable organization pursuant to Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code #23701d.

Sunday Speakers

September 5 - Open Discussion (Labor Day)

September 12 - Eugene Cash

Eugene Cash is the founding teacher of the San Francisco Insight Meditation Community of San Francisco. He teaches at Spirit Rock Meditation Center and leads intensive meditation retreats internationally. His teaching is influenced by both Burmese and Thai streams of the Theravada tradition as well as Zen and Tibetan Buddhist practice. He is also a teacher of the Diamond Approach, a school of spiritual investigation and self-realization developed by A. H. Almaas.

September 19 - Alan Levin

Alan Levin, M.A. L.M.F.T., is a long time explorer of the interface of psychological and spiritual development, social/political activism and the ceremonial use of entheogenic plants and other substances. He has been a licensed psychotherapist since 1985 and established a non-profit ecopsychology training program, Holos Institute, in California. He has been meditating and teaching different forms of meditation for several decades. He now resides with his wife in Rockland County, NY and together they work as Sacred River Healing. He is the author of *Crossing the Boundary - Stories of Jewish Leaders of Other Spiritual Paths* and leads a webinar series, *Staying Sane While Making the World Better*.

September 26 - Daigan Gaither

Rev. Daigan Gaither began Buddhist practice in 1995 in the Vipassana (Insight) tradition before studying Zen in 2003 with Ryushin Paul Haller Roshi. He received Lay Ordination in 2006 where he was given the name Daigan or "Great Vow," and received Priest Ordination in July 2011. Daigan speaks internationally on a variety of topics particularly around gender, sexuality, social justice and their intersections with the Dharma. He also sits on a number of boards and committees that serve community needs and further social justice causes.

Daigan has a BA in Philosophy and Religion from San Francisco State University, and an MA in Buddhist Studies. He identifies as a disabled, queer, white, cis male and uses he/him/they pronouns. Daigan can be reached at queerdharma.net.

October 3 - Dale Borglum

Dale Borglum is the founder and Executive Director of The Living/Dying Project. He is a pioneer in the conscious dying movement and has worked directly with thousands of people with life threatening illness and their families for over 30 years. In 1981, Dale founded the first residential facility for people who wished to die consciously in the United States, The Dying Center. He has taught and lectured extensively on the topics of spiritual support for those with life-threatening illness, caregiving as a spiritual practice, and healing at the edge of illness, of death, of loss, of crisis. Dale has a BS from UC Berkeley and a PhD from Stanford University. He is the co-author of *Journey of Awakening: A Meditator's Guidebook* and has taught meditation for the past 35 years.

October 10 - Tim Wicks

Tim Wicks – Born in Utah and raised in London, Gengyoko Tim Wicks studied fine art at San Francisco State University and received his MFA with distinction from California College of Arts and Crafts. He studied for four years with Spirit Rock teacher Eugene Cash and was a steering committee member of the Insight Meditation Community of San Francis-

co. Impressed with Mahayana Buddhism and the bodhisattva ideal, he studied with Michael Wenger and received Lay ordination (Jukai) in 2006. He trained in the sewing of Buddha's robe with Zenkei Blanche Hartman since 2007 and now teaches sewing at City Center. Tim received Priest Ordination from Michael Wenger in 2013 and has completed the Shogaku Priest Ongoing Training program. He is a now student of Rinso Ed Sattizahn.

October 17 - Open Discussion

October 24 - Steven Tierney

Steven Tierney is Professor Emeritus of Counseling Psychology at CIIS. Steven began his Buddhist practice in 1993 and is now an ordained priest in the Soto Zen lineage of Suzuki Roshi. He is a licensed psychotherapist in private practice in San Francisco, specializing in addiction and recovery, life transitions and resilience. His therapeutic approaches are grounded in mindfulness-based, trauma-informed therapies. He is the co-founder and CEO of the San Francisco Mindfulness Foundation. Dr. Tierney is a certified suicide prevention and intervention trainer and offers community based workshops to promote safer, healthier communities.

October 31 - Melvin Escobar

Melvin Escobar is a bilingual/bicultural Dharma teacher, licensed psychotherapist, and certified yoga instructor. He is a graduate of EBMC's Commit to Dharma, and for more than a decade has served EBMC in a variety of roles, including on the development team for Resilience, Refuge and (R)evolution, a six-month leadership program for people of color. He has devoted 25 years to serving people from marginalized communities, drawing on his life experience as a queer man of color from an immigrant working-class background. Having encountered the priceless wisdom embodied in Buddhism and Yoga, he continues daily to learn the revolutionary potential of body-centered contemplative practices for personal and social healing.

November 7 - David Lewis

David Lewis has been following the dharma path for 45 years and has a degree in comparative religious studies. He teaches Insight Meditation and enjoys sharing the dharma at several sanghas around the Bay Area. He is a proud long time member of GBF

November 14 - Open Discussion or Zoom Retreat

Open Discussion or Zoom of GBF's annual retreat. The specific program will be determined as this date nears, due to changing COVID-19 precautions.

November 21 - Devin Berry

Devin Berry has been practicing Insight meditation since 1999. He regularly teaches at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS). Devin has undertaken many periods of silent long-term retreat practice. He is a community teacher at East Bay Meditation center in Oakland, CA where he co-founded both the teen and men of color sanghas. Devin recently relocated to western Massachusetts from the San Francisco Bay Area. He is deeply committed to the personal and collective liberation of marginalized communities knowing that the integration of reflection and insight, clarity, and wisdom give rise to wise action.

November 28 - Open Discussion (Thanksgiving)

**GBF NEWSLETTER
2261 MARKET STREET #456A
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94114
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

by the power and truth of this practice, may all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness, may all be free from sorrow and the causes of sorrow, may all never be separated from the sacred happiness which is without sorrow, and may all live in equanimity, without too much attachment or too much aversion, believing in the equality of all that lives.

—GBF dedication of merit