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# Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community



*"When we let go of what we think should happen, we can appreciate what is happening." —Pema Chödrön*

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As the wheel of seasons turns and we feel the first whispers of autumn in the air, September invites us into a time of beautiful transition. The intensity of summer begins to soften into the golden contemplative light that calls us deeper within.

This month, we gather our harvest - not just from the gardens that have nourished our bodies, but from the inner cultivation we've been tending throughout this year of growth and discovery. What seeds of wisdom have taken root? What practices have blossomed into sources of genuine peace and joy?

September's energy reminds us that every ending is also a beginning, every letting go creates space for something new to emerge. As nature demonstrates this truth so elegantly - releasing leaves to nourish next spring's growth - we too can practice the art of graceful release, trusting in the cycles that sustain all life.

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## Welcome to Our New Chair of Land of Joy's Board of Trustees





We're happy to announce that Paul Wells has recently been appointed as the new Chair of the Board at Land of Joy.

He brings a blend of experience and commitment that will support our community as we continue to grow and evolve, while his thoughtful approach and dedication to our values will be an asset as we look ahead.

We look forward to offering service with Paul in strengthening Land of Joy's foundation while keeping the heart of our community at the centre of everything

we do.

Please join us in welcoming him to this role.

## **A Note From Paul:**

There is something about Land of Joy that cannot be rushed.

Time here moves at its own natural pace - a single day can stretch like a week, while a ten-day retreat slips by like a dream. It is a very special place.

When the community here asked me to hold the role of Chair of the board of trustees, it seemed like a rare opportunity to support a unique place and unique group of people who are doing extraordinary things. From our team of volunteers who have chosen a life of service, to retreatants who choose lives of contemplative practice, to our benefactors who choose to provide the foundations from which this can happen - this is a very special place indeed.

*"Anybody who dedicates their life to achieving lam rim realizations with the goal to liberate numberless beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and to bring to enlightenment, this is what I regard as the most important thing in the world." - Lama Zopa Rinpoche*

I look forward to serving the community, retreatants, teachers and volunteers at Land of Joy with a gentle touch, deep gratitude for what's gone before and clarity and care for what lies ahead.

I'd like to share a moment of thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way towards this place of quiet, practice and contemplation. Particular gratitude goes to Beth, our Director, who is thoughtfully guiding Land of Joy into its second decade; to Phara Khenchen Tulku Rinpoche, for sharing his heart of Dharma with us; and to our outgoing Chair Laura, whose energetic vision supported the community when it was needed the most.

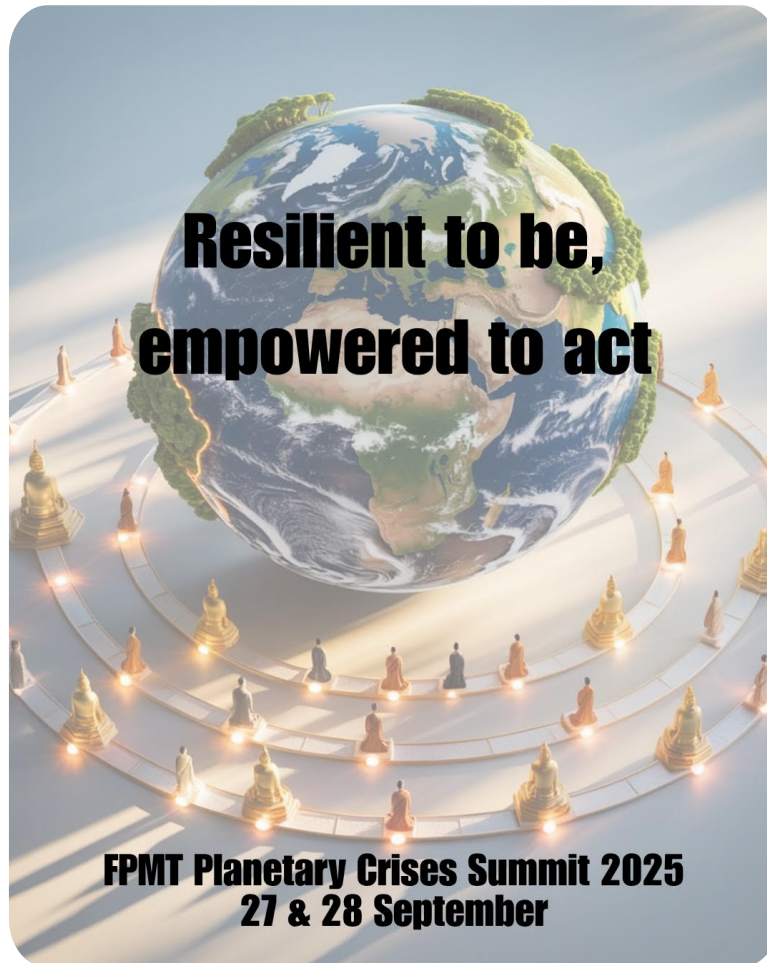
May Land of Joy continue to be a place of refuge, a place of nature, of solitude and group practice, guided by our Gurus both inner and outer. May it be a place where hearts are opened and minds are sharpened, where we tread lightly on the land, where the Buddhadharma flourishes and where practitioners achieve correct realisations.



With gratitude - Paul

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## Planetary Crises Summit 2025 Buddhist Wisdom for Global Challenges



**Where:** At Land of Joy

**Format:** Hybrid - online teachings in the gompa at Land of Joy followed by local nature based activities

**Facilitators:** Various online & Paul Wielgus onsite

**Attendance:** Flexible with whole weekend or single day attendance.

"It is a crisis of mind," observes Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche about our

planetary challenges. "And we have the power of Dharma, which gives us the methods to develop the mind and work at the root of the problem."

**This September 27-28, Land of Joy joins Buddhist centers across Europe for the FPMT Planetary Crises Summit 2025, exploring how ancient wisdom can guide us through modern challenges.**

**The Journey - Saturday:** "Resilient to be" - cultivating inner strength to face our troubled world with wisdom. **Sunday:** "Empowered to act" - discovering how communities become refuges for positive change.

Morning sessions connect us online with renowned teachers including Ven. Amy Miller, Andy Wistreich, and Paula Chichester. Afternoons bring teachings home through walking meditations in Land of Joy's countryside and woodlands.

**Why Here?** What makes this weekend distinctive is our commitment to learning from the Earth itself. Planetary healing begins with remembering our deep interconnection with the natural world which surrounds Land of Joy.

The weekend welcomes whole weekend or single day attendance. Whether exploring Buddhist climate responses or simply curious about meditation in nature, engage at your own pace.

[Register here](#)

***Together, our community can become a beacon of light.***

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## Help Guide a Buddhist Retreat Centre



We are looking for thoughtful community minded people to help shape the future of Land of Joy – a peaceful Buddhist retreat centre in Northumberland.

### **What You'll Gain:**

- The opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives
- Experience in charity governance and management
- The chance to be part of a warm, supportive community

### **What We're Looking For:**

- ❤️ A heart connection with our mission
- 👉 Commitment to quarterly meetings (remote or onsite)
- 🌱 Some space for development work between meetings where necessary.
- 🔧 Skills in charity law, land stewardship, general legal skills, or local links particularly useful
- 💡 A collaborative spirit



### **How to Apply:**

If you would like to help guide Land of Joy into the future, we would love to hear from you! For an informal chat please email [chair@landofjoy.co.uk](mailto:chair@landofjoy.co.uk) and [Secretary@landofjoy.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@landofjoy.co.uk).

Join us in creating a place of peace and transformation 🙏

**Become a Trustee at Land of Joy**

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**With Profound Thanks ✨**



After fifteen months of dedicated service, we bid a bittersweet farewell to Star, whose presence has been a true gift to our Land of Joy community. As both our devoted housekeeper and skilled retreat coordinator, Star has touched every corner of our centre with her care and attention to detail.

From the gleaming surfaces that welcomed each new group of retreatants to the seamless coordination that allowed teachers and participants to focus purely on practice, Star's behind-the-scenes work created the foundation for countless transformative experiences. Her culinary contributions - those memorable pesto pasta dishes and artfully arranged colorful salads - brought nourishment and joy to our shared meals, reminding us that even the simplest acts of preparation can be expressions of love.

What we'll remember most is Star's generous spirit. Her warmth radiated through every interaction, her reliability provided steady ground for our community, and her genuine care for each person who walked through our doors embodied the very heart of dharma service. Whether troubleshooting last-minute retreat details or simply offering a welcoming smile to a nervous first-time visitor, Star consistently demonstrated how service can be a profound spiritual practice.

Volunteering at a dharma centre is indeed an offering to the teachings themselves, and Star's dedication over these months has been a beautiful expression of dana - generous giving that expects nothing in return. Her contributions have supported countless individuals on their spiritual journeys, creating ripples of benefit that extend far beyond what any of us can measure.

As Star transitions to serve at another spiritual centre, we celebrate this continuation of her dharma path while holding deep gratitude for the time we've shared together. Though we'll miss her daily presence, she will always remain part of our Land of Joy family. ❤️

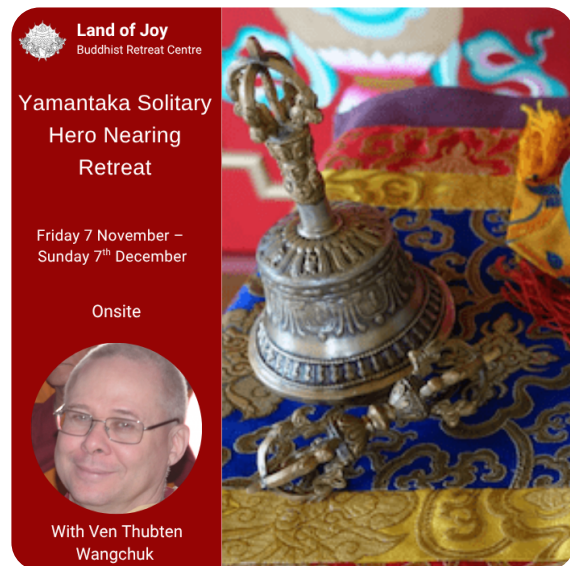




## Upcoming Retreats

### Shamatha Retreat: Cultivating Clear Attention with Ven Mary

We invite you to join us for an essential foundation retreat focusing on Shamatha - the development of calm abiding that provides the mental stability necessary for all advanced spiritual practice. Led by Ven Mary, this retreat offers participants the opportunity to cultivate the clear, focused mind that enables genuine transformation.



### Yamantaka Nearing Retreat with Ven Wangchuk

We invite you to join us for a transformative one-month Yamantaka Nearing retreat, led by the esteemed Ven Wangchuk in his fourth return to Land of Joy. This profound practice offers participants the rare opportunity to engage deeply with one of Tibetan Buddhism's most powerful wisdom practices under the guidance of a teacher who has studied with many great masters and whose teachings are renowned for their clarity and authenticity.

*Open to those who have received the Solitary Hero Yamantaka initiation.*

## Recent Retreats



### **Another World is Possible: Green Tara Practice as a Path of Compassion in Action**

What a profound weekend we shared together! In the gentle embrace of Green Tara's compassionate presence, our retreat community discovered how to transform the vulnerability and uncertainty of these times into genuine spiritual strength.

Led by Ven Amy's wise guidance, we explored how to meet our fears, pain, and aversion not as obstacles but as doorways to deeper compassion. Through the beautiful integration of Lam Rim meditation with Green Tara's sadhana and mantra recitation, participants learned to hold space for their own suffering while cultivating the heart of bodhicitta - the wish to awaken for the benefit of all beings.

Our retreatants left Land of Joy carrying with them Green Tara's gifts: resilience, inner joy, and the understanding that by developing ourselves with

loving-kindness, we naturally become sources of positive influence in our world.

***The seeds planted during our time together will continue to blossom in ways both seen and unseen. 🌱💚***

**"This was my first time here and it was altogether a wonderful, life enhancing, transformative experience."**

**"I really feel confident to commit to incorporating more meditation into my daily routine now."**

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## 2026 Spiritual Programme Coming Soon

We're delighted to share that our team is putting the finishing touches on Land of Joy's 2026 spiritual programme, and we couldn't be more excited about what's taking shape.

This year's planning process has been particularly enriching as we've carefully considered feedback from our community, explored new teaching opportunities, and worked to create a balanced offering that serves practitioners at every stage of their journey. From intensive retreats with renowned teachers to gentle introduction workshops, we're crafting a year that promises depth, variety, and genuine transformation.

**Mark your calendars for October** when we'll be releasing the complete 2026 schedule! This will give you plenty of time to plan ahead and secure your spots for the retreats and programmes that call to you.

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## Behind the Scenes with our Volunteers



This month we've been fortunate to have Tom and Brian quietly working their magic around the centre, tackling the essential maintenance tasks that keep our retreat space functioning smoothly. From addressing some of the more pressing things like fire extinguishers that needed attaching to the walls and doors that were difficult to open, to resealing the volunteer shower and building a new shoe rack, these two dedicated volunteers have been invaluable.

There's something beautiful about witnessing dharma in action through practical service. Tom and Brian have approached each task with care and attention, understanding that maintaining our physical space is itself a form of spiritual practice. Their willingness to handle the unglamorous but necessary work - often unseen by guests but deeply appreciated by our residential community - exemplifies the spirit of selfless service that makes Land of Joy possible.

***A heartfelt thank you to Tom and Brian for keeping our sanctuary running smoothly, one repair at a time.***

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## What's Cooking in our Kitchen?





Food is love made visible, and our community kitchen has been overflowing with both this month. From the fragrant curries that filled the air to the garden-fresh salads, every meal has been a practice in gratitude and presence.

Our volunteer chefs have been experimenting with seasonal abundance, each dish prepared with intention, each meal shared as an opportunity to nourish not just our bodies but our sense of interconnection.

## Join Our Woodland Working Week, October 24th - 31st, 2025!

Ready to reconnect with nature while helping preserve our precious woodlands? **We're looking for wonderful volunteers to join us for a week of meaningful outdoor work in our beautiful sanctuary.**

- Days start at 9:30 with optional communal prayers
- Woodland tasks suited to your comfort level
- Morning tea breaks with biscuits under the trees
- Hearty lunches and home-cooked meals provided
- Wildlife spotting - kingfishers, red squirrels, deer, herons & more! Evening meditation and relaxation time

### What We Offer:

- Accommodation at Land of Joy (shared rooms)
- All meals provided as our thank you
- The chance to care for a wildlife haven
- Deep connection with nature and community

Whether you're handy with tools or new to woodland work, we'll find tasks that suit you perfectly! Concerned about what's involved? Email [bookings@landofjoy.co.uk](mailto:bookings@landofjoy.co.uk) and we'll chat.

This is more than volunteering - it's a chance to nurture the land that nurtures so many souls (and wildlife friends!) —. If you're ready to get your hands in the earth book your place below!

**Book Your Place at Woodland Working Week**

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## Piecing It Together



Sometimes the most profound practices emerge organically from the simplest suggestions. What began as a thoughtful retreatant's idea to place a small 50-piece jigsaw puzzle in our common area has blossomed into a beautiful community meditation in motion.

Our volunteer team has discovered that puzzles offer a unique form of mindfulness - the gentle focus required to find just the right piece, the patience to work with what's available, and the satisfaction of watching something whole emerge from apparent chaos. There's something deeply meditative about the quiet concentration, the way conversations naturally flow as hands work together, and the collective joy when that perfect piece clicks into place.

From that original sweet-themed starter puzzle, we've progressed to increasingly ambitious projects - a 500-piece puzzle that captivated one dedicated volunteer for four blissful hours on her day off, and we're currently immersed in a stunning 1000-piece woodland scene.

This simple activity has created another way for our community to practice together. Whether someone contributes one piece or settles in for hours, each person adds to the collective effort. It's a beautiful metaphor for spiritual practice itself - progress happens piece by piece, requiring patience, attention, and the understanding that we're all part of something larger and more beautiful than we can see from our individual perspective.

Who knew that enlightenment could come with corner pieces? 





# Land of Joy in Bloom







We had a leek in the garden 🚰💧

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**A big thank you, as always, for your ongoing support of Land of Joy.  
Please continue to visit us and support us in any way you can.**

**We hope to see you soon!**



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Lama Thubten Yeshe, Founder

Founder and Spiritual Director, Lama Zopa Rinpoche

