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Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community

Spiritual Newsletter - January 2026



"There are so many problems in the world - what should we do? Doing Vajrasattva practice is the answer; doing purification is the answer. You are purifying negative karma, from where all the sufferings came. Purification is the answer to war, famine, disease, and the dangers from fire, water, earth,

and air. That is the answer. Of course by purifying negative karma collected since beginningless rebirth and by collecting extensive merits, this allows you to have realisations on the path to enlightenment and for your mind to change...There is always hope the mind can change, even to achieve enlightenment, so you can achieve a higher rebirth, ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara and enlightenment.”

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche -

As we step into this new year, we're reminded that every moment offers us the opportunity to begin again, a truth at the heart of our practice and one that January invites us to embrace with fresh intention.

At Land of Joy, we enter 2026 with gratitude for our community and excited to launch this year's retreat programme. Whether you're planning your first retreat with us or returning to deepen your practice, we're here to support your journey.

May this year bring you clarity, compassion, and the courage to meet each moment with an open heart.

**Next Month - Losar 2026: Tibetan New Year and
the Days of Miracles**



February 18, 2026

Losar, the Tibetan New Year, marks the beginning of the auspicious 15 Days of Miracles, ending on the full moon day of Chötrul Düchen on March 3, 2026. During this sacred period, virtuous actions are said to be powerfully multiplied - an exceptional time for practice, purification, and accumulating merit.

Losar also holds special significance for the FPMT community as we honour the anniversary of our beloved founder Lama Yeshe's passing in 1984. Lama Zopa Rinpoche encouraged all FPMT centers to keep Lama Yeshe's memory alive by sharing stories of his extraordinary compassion, humour, and wisdom.

We encourage you to explore the wealth of resources available through the [Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive](#) (LYWA), which preserves and shares the teachings of both Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. In times of global uncertainty, these teachings of equanimity, loving-kindness, compassion, and joy provide essential guidance for navigating both personal and collective challenges.

At Land of Joy, we'll be celebrating Losar with our **White Tara Long Life Retreat** (February 23 - March 4) led by Phara Khenchen Rinpoche and Di Carroll. This 10-day retreat, held during the Days of Miracles, is dedicated to the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and offers a powerful opportunity

to gather merit and make strong prayers for His Holiness's continued health and activity.

Stay tuned for more details about our Losar festivities - and may this Losar bring fresh beginnings, renewed inspiration, and boundless merit for all beings.

Join our Team: Spiritual Programme Coordinator Needed



Land of Joy is seeking a part-time Spiritual Programme Coordinator to join our team in guiding and coordinating our retreat programme. This remote volunteer role offers a meaningful opportunity to serve Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe's vision while working with a warm, collaborative team.

The SPC will support retreatants from application through to departure, work alongside Phara Khenchen Rinpoche to develop spiritual initiatives, build relationships with visiting teachers, and help shape our retreat programme for the years ahead.

We're looking for someone with familiarity with FPMT, strong organizational and digital skills, a kind and supportive communication style, and the ability to commit for at least 12 months.

This is a special opportunity to make a real difference in people's retreat experience while being part of a supportive sangha community.

[Learn More and Apply Here](#)

Upcoming Online Course



Mindful Heart

With Wendy Ridley

Wednesdays 7pm - 8:10pm from the 18th February until 3rd June with a 4 week break from 15th April until 13th May - ONLINE ONLY

Land of Joy is honoured to be piloting *A Mindful Heart*, a new 12-week course developed by the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW), inspired by Pam Cayton's *Creating Compassionate Cultures* program.

This transformative course supports participants in developing a deeper understanding of how the mind works, gradually letting go of destructive patterns of thought and behaviour while cultivating healthy self-confidence and deep, compassionate connection with others.

The course explores three core pathways - Knowledge, Strength, and Compassion - guiding participants toward a happier, more meaningful life

through twelve thoughtfully designed sessions including The Pursuit of Happiness, Understanding How Things Exist, Developing Healthy Self-Confidence, Compassion: Opening the Heart, Mindful Intention, Interconnection, Embracing Change, Transforming Harmful Emotions, and Cultivating Compassion.

This course is for anyone seeking to understand their mind and change unhelpful patterns, explore meaningful personal growth, cultivate compassion in daily life, or engage in reflective learning within a supportive environment. Whether you're new to mindfulness or experienced in practice, the course offers accessible practices, thoughtful dialogue, and flexible participation.

No previous experience of Buddhism or retreat is needed, just openness and curiosity.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

Upcoming Retreats



Making Space for Joy: Learning to Let Go

With Alison Murdoch & Anna Colao

Friday 30th January – Sunday 1st February 2026

As we step into a new year, this weekend retreat offers an opportunity to slow down, release what no longer serves us, and reconnect with our inner capacity

for joy and wholeness.

Drawing on the deep wisdom of the Buddha, we'll explore how letting go-of craving, aversion, and confusion-creates the space for joy to naturally arise. The basic premise of this retreat is that every living being has a natural capacity for compassion, wisdom, clarity, and spaciousness-what the Buddha called our Buddha nature. However, it's easy to lose sight of this in the rough and tumble of everyday life and to hold on to unhelpful patterns of thought that block our capacity for happiness.

This retreat offers a rare opportunity to step out of the noise of daily life and into a safe, nurturing space where we can reconnect with our body, align heart and mind, and begin to understand the habitual patterns that obscure our natural clarity. Together we'll explore what it means to let go with warmth, playfulness, and self-compassion so that we can be a more beneficial presence in the world.

This weekend blends meditation, reflection, and somatic practice rooted in Buddhist teachings. We'll identify patterns of thought and behavior that don't bring happiness to ourselves and those around us, and cultivate those that do.

Each day will include:

- Guided meditation and mindful movement
- Group discussion and personal reflection
- Times of silence and sharing
- Opportunities to be in nature or rest with a book from our extensive library
- Saturday evening: Optional creative activity

Our aim is to create a warm, loving environment where you can settle, soften, and rediscover the freedom of simply being, helping each of us start the year in the best possible way.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



Mahamudra: Nature of Mind Retreat

With Roy Sutherwood

Saturday 7th – Saturday 14th February 2026

Mahamudra, "the great seal," is one of the most profound and direct paths within Tibetan Buddhism, a way of recognising the true nature of mind, beyond concepts, leading to deep inner freedom.

Land of Joy warmly welcomes back our much-loved annual Mahamudra retreat. In the dark winter days, join us to turn inward under the guidance of experienced and kind-hearted teacher Roy Sutherwood. The retreat is open to both newer and more experienced meditators, and is most suitable for those with some stability in meditation.

The Practice

In the Tibetan tradition presented here, we begin by resting in the clarity and awareness of mind, like a mirror becoming self-aware, and gradually move towards recognising the mirror's own emptiness. Each day includes short guided meditation sessions supported by mindful movement to help sustain focus without over-exhaustion.

What to Expect

- Guided meditations introducing the stages of Mahamudra practice
- Clear explanations of the view and approach to resting in awareness
- Gentle mindful exercises and group discussions

- Space for personal reflection and silence within supportive conditions

This step-by-step approach offers a profound method to realise liberation and enlightenment.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



White Tara Long Life Retreat

For the Long Life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

With Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) & Di Carroll

Monday 23rd February – Wednesday 4th March 2026

We are delighted to host a 10-day White Tara Long Life Retreat during the Days of Miracles—the auspicious period after Losar when virtuous actions are powerfully multiplied. Join Buddhist communities worldwide in offering prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life as we mark his 90th year.

This will be the first retreat Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) will lead at Land of Joy, and we are extremely grateful to him for offering his precious time and knowledge, supported by Di Carroll.

This retreat will be structured but gentle, creating the conditions to go deeper day by day. You will experience:

- Daily White Tara sadhana with mantra recitation
- Discussions with the retreat leaders

- Group prayers and dedications for the long life of His Holiness
- Spacious time for silence, reflection, and integration
- Supportive community conditions that help stabilise practice
- An opportunity to observe the eight Mahayana Precepts on one of the days

Requirements: Full kriya tantra empowerment or White Tara 'Je Nang' permission to practice. [See retreat information page]

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



Vajrayogini Enabling Action 100,000 Mantra Retreat

With Paula Chichester (Supported by Yeshe Palmo)

Sunday 12th April – Thursday 7th May 2026

Land of Joy warmly welcomes the return of this important retreat for those wishing to deepen their connection with Vajrayogini. Over 21 days, practitioners will complete the required 100,000 mantra recitations in supportive retreat conditions, conclude with the fire puja, and have the opportunity to engage in the extensive self-initiation.

Paula Chichester will lead the Vajrayogini meditations and discussions with warmth and insight. We're delighted to welcome Yeshe Palmo, who will offer

daily Awareness Yoga sessions—a unique approach developed through decades of tantric practice and somatic work with the channels, winds, and drops.

Requirements: Vajrayogini (Naro Kacho) empowerment from Sakya or Gelug tradition; highest yoga tantra prerequisite initiation; familiarity with at least one Vajrayogini commentary; strong grounding in bodhicitta.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

Retreat Hut Availability



Land of Joy is a wonderful environment for retreat. Our semi-rural location offers quiet, spacious and beautiful grounds which can be explored during your breaks whilst the retreat facilities provide a private space that will support your practice.

Our three private retreat huts are in a part of the woodland close to the main house overlooking the valley. We ask that you plan to stay for a minimum of one week and a maximum of three months.

We still have availability in 2026:

- **Retreat Hut 1:** 18th - 28th July | 8th September - 29th October, 2026
- **Retreat Hut 2:** 8th May - 29th June | 5th September - 20th October | 2nd

- 20th November | 8th - 18th December, 2026

- **Retreat Hut 3:** 15th June - 5th July | 4th - 22nd September | 5th October - 26th November | 10th - 20th December, 2026

NOTE: Our retreat huts bookings are open to 2027, be sure to book in advance!

"I felt well supported and catered for the whole time I was here from arrival, during, and departure."

-Rosslyn, a recent retreatant in a private retreat hut-

[Learn More, Check Availability and Book Your Stay](#)

Monthly Recommendation: The Wisdom Podcast



The Wisdom Podcast

Available wherever you listen to podcasts

Looking to deepen your understanding of Buddhist practice and philosophy? The Wisdom Podcast offers rich conversations with leading thinkers from the Buddhist world, featuring interviews with remarkable teachers including His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness the Karmapa, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche, Bhikkhu Bodhi, Robert Thurman, Tara Brach, Joseph Goldstein, and Sharon Salzberg.

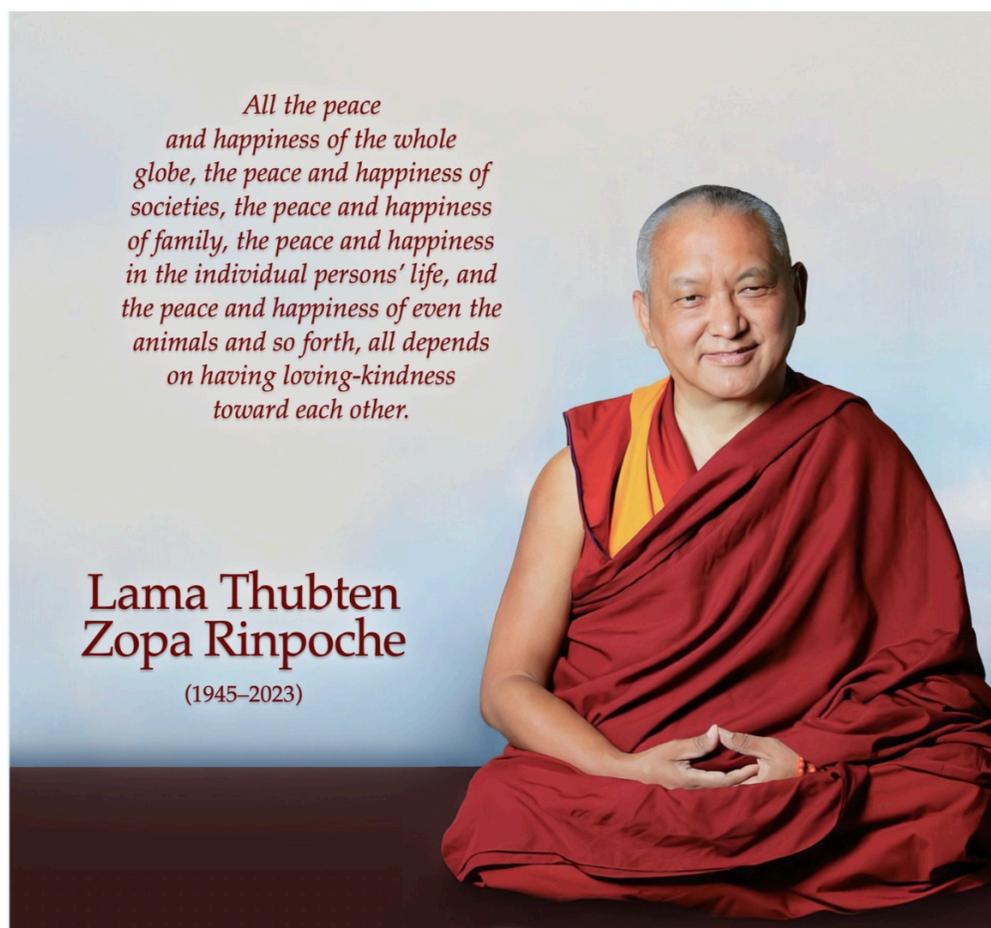
Each episode takes you on a fascinating exploration of Buddhism and meditation, as guests share life-changing practices, timeless philosophies, and new ways to think and live. Whether you're commuting, doing dishes, or taking a mindful walk, these conversations offer inspiration and insight for integrating the Dharma into daily life.

Perfect for both newcomers and experienced practitioners, The Wisdom Podcast brings the teachings of contemporary Buddhist masters directly to

your ears.

Listen here to the 100th Episode: **His Holiness the Dalai Lama -
Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics**

The Benefits of Practicing Compassion



In this moving teaching from October 2019 at the Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni in Kalmykia, Russia, Lama Zopa Rinpoche offers profound insights on developing compassion.

Rinpoche shares beautiful stories that bring the practice of compassion to life, including the incredible example of his own mother, who recited 50,000 Mani mantras daily despite being unable to read or follow texts - her practice resulted in extraordinary compassion. He also recounts tales of lamas whose compassion was so great that even their pets developed this quality, stopping chasing other animals or becoming vegetarian.

This teaching, given as a preliminary to the Great Chenrezig Initiation, offers both inspiration and practical guidance for cultivating compassion in our own lives.



Explore More Resources

Nurturing Our Branches of Joy



Branches of Joy: Growing Strong Together

Like a tree that needs deep roots to flourish, Land of Joy depends on the steady support of our monthly donors. Your consistent generosity creates the stable foundation that allows us to plan ahead, invest in our facilities, and ensure the Dharma remains accessible to all.

In 2025, Branches of Joy members made it possible to welcome hundreds of retreatants, complete the dining room renovation and make progress on our East Wing renovation. Your monthly gifts combine to create lasting refuge for practitioners for years to come.

Join the Branches of Joy community and help us continue offering retreat opportunities under our pure generosity model.

Learn more about and join our Branches of Joy

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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