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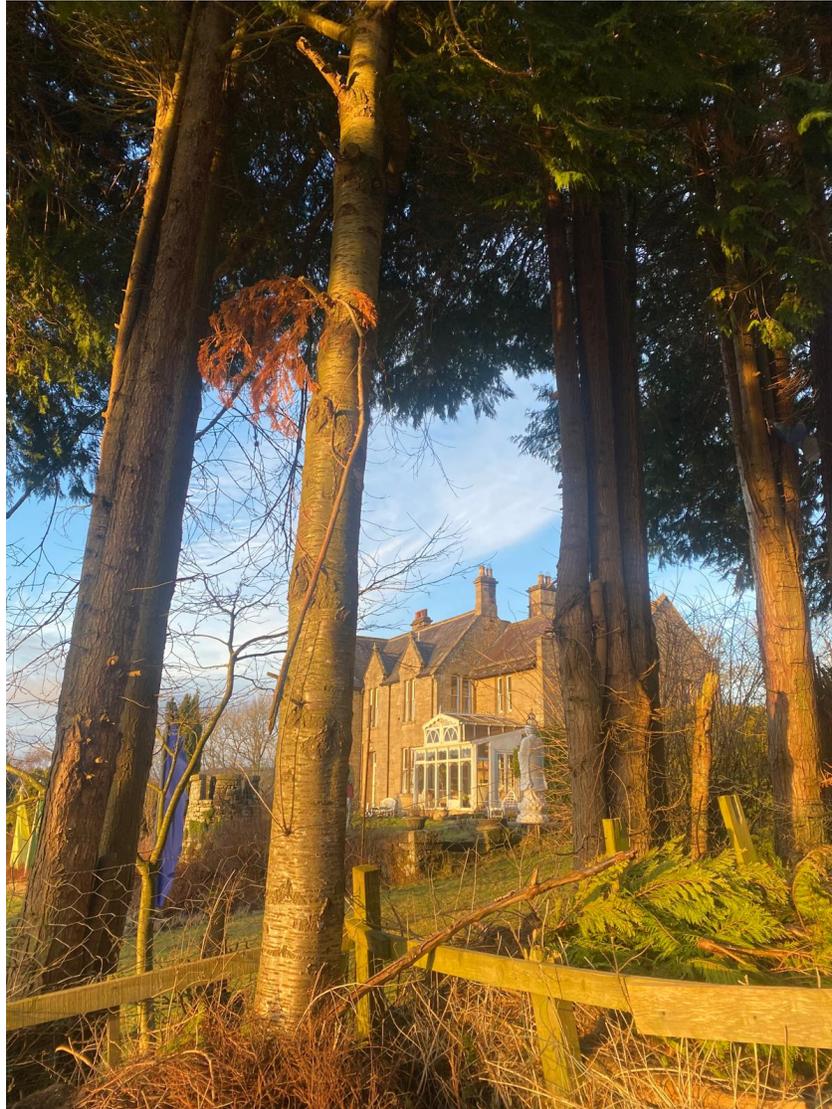
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# Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community

## Spiritual Newsletter - February 2026



”I’d love to share why individual retreat is so valuable... one of the biggest reasons retreat works is the environment. When you’re in a busy place, distractions are constant: people, noise, obligations, even just the feeling that you should be doing something else.

But here, it’s different. It’s quiet. It’s spacious.

And there’s very little to distract you... other than your own mind.

And that might sound daunting, but actually it’s what makes retreat so effective.

Because when the outer world settles, you finally get to see what’s happening inside - and begin to work with it.”

- Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) -



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## Building Retreat Huts Together

Retreat spaces like ours are held together by the quiet love of many people - those who have practiced here, those who have offered service, and those whose generosity makes it possible for others to meet themselves with the honesty and gentleness Tulku-la describes.

If your heart is moved to help us build more retreat huts so others can experience this same stillness and inner freedom, your offering becomes a part of the fabric of the building, an expression of intention for the benefit of all beings who will reside and practice here for years to come.

You can learn more about the two new retreat huts and make a donation here <https://landofjoy.co.uk/building-retreat-huts-together/>

## Donate Here

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February has arrived with a sense of quiet momentum, and our 2026 retreat programme is now in full swing. It's deeply satisfying to welcome practitioners through our doors again - people arriving to settle into the stillness, ready to work with the teachings in the space and quiet that only retreat can offer. We are so happy that they are here.

We are in the Days of Miracles - it's a time for fresh beginnings, for setting wholesome intentions, and for recognising the extraordinary opportunity this period offers for practice and generosity alike.

**Exciting News:** We have added the dates for our Family Retreat Weekend to our website - Friday, 31st July - Monday, 3rd August. [More information can be found here](#) - register your interest now if your family would like to join us for this wonderful retreat!

Thank you for being such an important part of our community.

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## Chotrul Duchon



The **Fifteen Days of Miracles**, from the first day of the Tibetan new year (Losar, **February 18**) until the fifteenth (**March 3**), commemorate the special time when Guru Shakyamuni Buddha showed miraculous powers in order to subdue the Six Founders, who lacked faith in him, and to inspire more faith in his followers. It culminates on the full moon, the fifteenth day of the lunar

calendar, **Chotrul Duchen**. During this time, it is believed that the effects of both positive and negative actions are multiplied ten million times.

The new year spawns a time of increase in virtuous activity amongst Buddhist practitioners. Any actions done during that period of time, for better or worse, are multiplied in their power by virtue of being in alignment or out of alignment with the great deeds the Buddha himself did during this same astrological period over 2,500 years ago. It is a very powerful time to practice and increase one's commitment to both practice and study as the power of that magical event can be harnessed to assist in our personal evolution towards enlightenment.

### **Practice Advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche:**

Lama Zopa Rinpoche [offered extensive advice](#) for how to make the most of these great holy multiplying days. Of particular note:

- Take the [eight Mahayana precepts](#): Students can receive the lineage of these precepts from [a specially produced video](#) of Lama Zopa Rinpoche offering them in May 2020.
- Recite the [\*Sutra Remembering the Three Jewels\*](#)

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**Join our Team as a Remote Spiritual Programme  
Coordinator**



Land of Joy is seeking a part-time remote Spiritual Programme Coordinator to join our team in guiding and coordinating our retreat programme. This 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 sound knowledge of sutra and tantra, familiarity with FPMT, strong organisational 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](#)

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**Upcoming Online Courses**



## 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](#)

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## **Who Lives, Dies & Is Reborn: A Buddhist insight into who we are and what happens at the time of death**

**With Ven Mary Reavey**

**An ONLINE ONLY weekend, Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th April**

This weekend offers a clear and practical enquiry into how the sense of self is constructed and what this reveals about living dying and rebirth. Common confusion between reincarnation and rebirth will be clarified, opening the possibility of living life and meeting death with clarity, courage and freedom.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

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## **Upcoming Retreats**



## **Vajrayogini Enabling Action 100,000 Mantra Retreat**

**With Paula Chichester (Supported by Yeshe Palmo)**

**Sunday 10th 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](#)**

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## Loving Kindness: A Journey into Compassion & Equanimity

**With Paula Chichester & Lou Beaumont**  
**Friday 15th May – Sunday 17th May 2026**

This weekend retreat is an invitation to open our hearts to the power of loving kindness, for ourselves, for others, and for the world we share.

Paula and Lou will guide us through a blend of teachings, guided meditations, group discussion, and gentle body practices, exploring kindness as a profound source of strength and happiness. Together, we'll look closely at what supports kindness, what can prevent it, and how we can cultivate it in daily life with courage, balance, and warmth.

Short sessions of pranayama and chi gong will support the retreat by relaxing the body and mind, creating an open foundation from which loving kindness can naturally grow. These embodied practices will be woven gently alongside Dharma reflections and opportunities to share and learn from one another.

We'll explore the courage and strength of kindness, how to respond to others with clarity and compassion, what obstacles can close the heart, and why caring for ourselves is the foundation for genuine kindness to others.

This retreat is for anyone who wishes to live with more warmth, compassion, and courage—whether you're new to meditation or an experienced practitioner. By attending, you'll have the chance to rest, reflect, and deepen your connection to the natural kindness already within you, discovering how it can bring joy and resilience to your own life and ripple outward to others.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

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## **The Bridge from Shamatha to Vipassana**

**With Ven Mary Reavey**

**Tuesday 26th May – Sunday 31st May 2026 (WAITING LIST AVAILABLE)**

This retreat is an invitation to explore one of Buddhism's most time-honoured pairings - the calm, focused mind of Shamatha and the penetrating clarity of Vipassana - and to discover how, together, they open the door to genuine insight and lasting inner freedom.

Drawing on the clear and precise teachings of B. Alan Wallace, this retreat guides you through the complementary relationship between these two practices: first, learning to steady and settle the mind through the training of attention, and then applying that stability to direct enquiry into the nature of experience itself. Through guided meditation, Dharma reflections, and group discussion, you will explore how these practices can transform not only your time on the cushion, but the whole of daily life.

Land of Joy's peaceful surroundings offer the ideal conditions for this kind of deepening work - longer sittings, periods of silence, and the natural beauty of the retreat environment all supporting the mind to settle and insight to arise. Whether you are brand new to meditation or looking to refine an established practice, you will leave with practical tools and a clearer sense of the path ahead.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)

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## Recent Retreats



Recently, we hosted our beloved annual Mahamudra retreat, offering practitioners a rare opportunity to explore one of Tibetan Buddhism's most profound paths to recognising the true nature of mind. Under the warm and experienced guidance of teacher Roy Sutherwood, participants turned inward during the quiet of winter, moving step by step through the stages of Mahamudra, from resting in the clarity and awareness of mind to touching the deeper recognition of its emptiness. A gentle yet powerful container for inner exploration, it was a meaningful gathering for all who attended.

**Retreat Feedback:**

*"It was fantastic - I felt very well looked after by the wonderful volunteers, and I have learned a lot from the retreat that I hope to take back into my life back home."*

*"10/10. Thank you so much to the team. They went above and beyond to make my stay an absolute pleasure."*

*"A very caring, considerate and engaged teacher - and hugely knowledgeable. Very generous with his time and knowledge."*

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## 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:** 22nd September - 30th September | 27th October - December 31st
- **Retreat Hut 2:** 20th April - 17th May | 20th June - 28th June | 29th September - 7th October | 3rd - 19th November | 8th - 18th December, 2026
- **Retreat Hut 3:** 24th March - April 7th | 4th - 21st September | 5th October - 26th November | 10th - 20th December, 2026

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

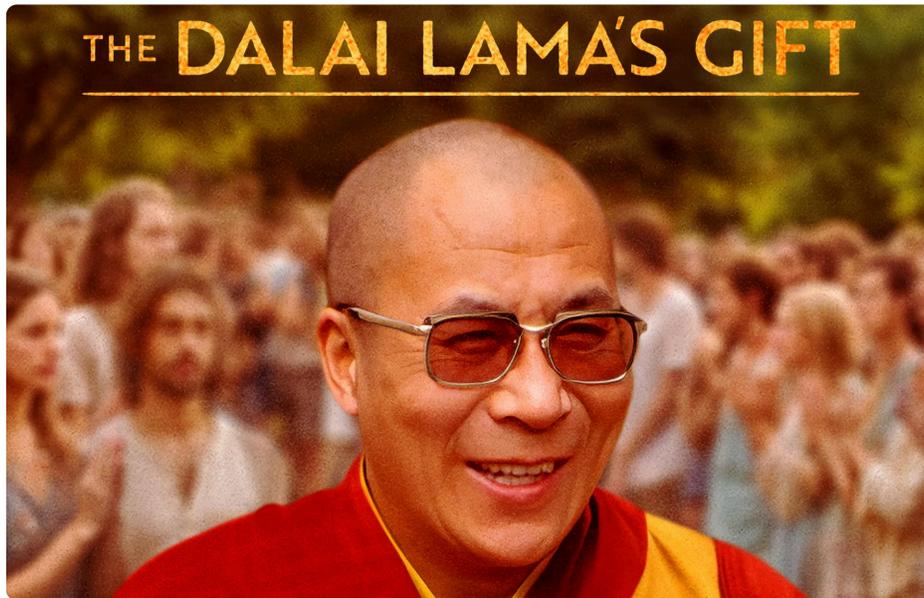
*"I was very happy to see so much wildlife now - I saw an otter twice, bats, two herons, and three white-tailed deer! Happy sentient beings!"*

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

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

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## Monthly Recommendation: The Dalai Lama's Gift Film



### **The Dalai Lama's Gift: A Documentary Offering**

In 1981, His Holiness the Dalai Lama performed the Kalachakra initiation in the United States for the first time, a historic moment in bringing Tibetan Buddhism to the West. The ceremony took place in a cornfield in rural Wisconsin, where students and volunteers built America's first Kalachakra Temple in just a few months.

Filmmaker Dr. Ed Bastian documented every stage of the preparation and ceremony, including rare interviews with His Holiness, Geshe Lhundup Sopa, and many who would become influential Buddhist teachers. The original footage was preserved at the Smithsonian for over forty years.

Now digitised and woven together with contemporary interviews and the first-ever animation of the three-dimensional Kalachakra mandala, *The Dalai*

*Lama's Gift* revisits this sacred encounter, a story of devotion, resilience, and transformation that continues to ripple across generations.

The film is available to watch free as an offering of peace and compassion. If you're moved by it, consider supporting The Spiritual Paths Foundation to help bring this beautiful work to more people around the world.

[Watch the film here](#)

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## Become a Branch 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**

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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  
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