

[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

[Translate](#) ▼

[View this email in your browser](#)



# Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community



*"Each one of us is responsible for all other living beings' happiness besides our own. As a result, your loving kindness is the most wish-fulfilling thing in life, more precious than anything else in the world. That makes for a most satisfying, fulfilling life."*

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche-

---

As spring settles gently over the Northumberland hills, we find ourselves pausing in a spirit of deep gratitude, for this community, for the practice we share, and for the many ways you continue to show up in support of this place and its vision.

This month, we have much to celebrate and much to share. From exciting progress on our retreat hut project to the teachings, events, and offerings that fill these pages, we hope this newsletter finds you well and brings a little warmth to your inbox.

**Thank you, as always, for being part of the Land of Joy family. It is a genuine joy to walk this path together.**

---

## Building Retreat Huts Together: Project Update



Retreat Hut Project Update - March 2026

Our retreat hut building project is moving forward beautifully. We are deeply honoured to share that FPMT International Office has offered Land of Joy a matching grant of \$16,500 USD from the Practice and Retreats Fund, specifically in support of our retreat huts. This is a remarkable expression of confidence in this project and in our community, and we are so moved by it.

A matching grant works in a wonderful way: once we raise the corresponding funds on our end, the grant is released, effectively doubling the impact of every pound given. We have already raised an incredible £9,520, which means we are £3,000 away from reaching the £12,500 target to release the funds. As soon as that happens we will hit our £16,000 target for the Creating the Foundations Stage of the fundraising. From there, we are excited to start the 'Building the Structures' stage, with FPMT's grant funding helping us get started.

To give you a sense of how the project is taking shape on the ground, we're delighted to share a short video our Director Beth filmed recently on-site at Land of Joy. Seeing the future home of our retreat huts is something so special. We hope it brings you as much joy as it brought us.

If you feel moved to contribute to this amazing opportunity, we welcome your support with grateful hearts. No gift is too small, and every offering brings these spaces for practice one step closer to welcoming retreatants.

[Donate Here](#)

---

## Land of Joy Volunteers



### **Kitchen Volunteer Needed!**

We are looking for a volunteer to join our kitchen team for the upcoming Vajrayogini Enabling Action Retreat! Community and service are at the heart of everything we do at Land of Joy, and we've found ourselves one pair of hands short for this upcoming gathering. If you have a love for nourishment and a bit of time to spare, we would love to welcome you into our kitchen!

### **Interested?**

Please reach out to Marie at [marie@landofjoy.co.uk](mailto:marie@landofjoy.co.uk) for more information.



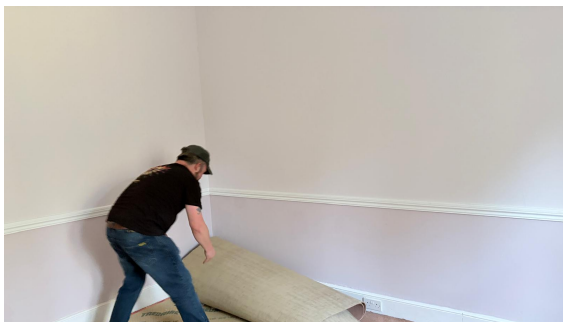
## Behind the Scenes: A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Volunteers

As we prepare to warmly welcome retreatants for the Vajrayogini Enabling Action retreat, the air at Land of Joy is filled with a sense of quiet, joyful anticipation. So much goes into planning these retreats, and none of this would be possible without the incredible dedication of our volunteer team. They are the heart and hands of Land of Joy - thoughtfully prepping accommodations, organising the kitchen, and ensuring every corner of our sanctuary is ready to embrace the practitioners arriving soon.

To our volunteers: **Thank you.** We are so deeply grateful for your warmth, your energy, and the care you pour into making Land of Joy a true home for transformation. We couldn't do this without you!

---

## East Wing Project Update





Our East Wing transformation has been moving along, and with each passing week, this beloved space grows closer to the warm, welcoming retreat environment we have been envisioning together.

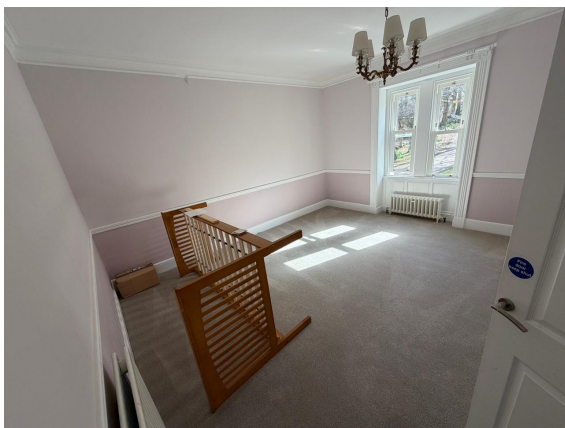
We are delighted to share that significant progress has been made this month. New carpeting is now down, bringing comfort and a sense of care to the floors beneath your feet. Fresh paint brightens the walls throughout, and our beautiful new windows have been installed, filling the rooms with the kind of quiet northern light that makes this corner of Northumberland so special.



None of this would be possible without the extraordinary generosity of our volunteers (including Lou, who has brought her beautiful eye for design to every corner of this project), who give not just their time but their skill, their patience, and their whole hearts to this project. To each and every person who has shown up with a paintbrush, a kind word, or a willingness to get their hands dirty - *thank you*. This is your work as much as ours.



We want to offer a particularly heartfelt acknowledgement to Martin, who has devoted himself to this project with remarkable dedication. Martin was here full time, patching, painting, and decorating with the kind of quiet, steady commitment that is truly a practice in itself. The East Wing carries the mark of his care in every room, and we are so deeply grateful.



---

## Upcoming Retreats



**A 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**

A Mindful Heart is a new 12-week course developed by the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW), inspired by Pam Cayton's Creating Compassionate Cultures program and currently being offered as a pilot by Land of Joy. This course is designed to support participants in developing a deeper understanding of how the mind works, gradually letting go of destructive patterns of thought and behaviour while cultivating a healthy self-confidence and a deep, compassionate connection with others.

[Register Here](#)



**Loving Kindness: A Journey into Compassion & Equanimity**

With Paula Chichester & Lou Beaumont, Friday 15th to Sunday 17th May.

This weekend retreat at Land of Joy is an invitation to open our hearts to the

power of loving kindness — for ourselves, for others, and for the world we share.

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

[Register Here](#)



## **Falling in Love with the Future**

With Paul Wielgus, Friday 19th to Monday 22nd June

This Summer Solstice gathering at Land of Joy is an invitation to pause, to breathe, and to remember what it feels like to be truly alive, rooted in nature, in community, and in yourself.

Over a long golden weekend at the height of summer, we will rest in the stillness of the land, share in meditation, breath, and gentle movement under open skies, gather around the fire in the long evenings, and practice the simple, radical art of being human together. The theme - *Fall in Love with the Future* - is not about optimism or escapism, but about something deeper: discovering that joy, hope, and creative response are acts of genuine courage, and that our wellbeing is inseparable from the living world around us.

This gathering is for anyone who feels the pull toward something more nourishing - the curious, the weary, the wild-hearted. No experience is needed,

just a willingness to show up and be surprised by your own aliveness.

Let the land love you back. 🌿

[Register Here](#)

---



## **Building Inner Strength: 16 Guidelines (Level 1)**

With Wendy Ridley, Friday 17th to Sunday 19th July

Feeling overwhelmed by global crises, work, family, or personal challenges? Seeking practical tools for positive change and emotional resilience? This experiential weekend retreat is designed for you.

We will explore embodied mindfulness and universal ethical values in this Level 1 of the 16 Guidelines for Life Program developed by the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW). The program offers a simple yet profound framework for reflecting on how we think, act, relate to others, and find meaning. Through mindfulness, self-inquiry, and ethical reflection, we will gain tools to foster well-being, purpose, and inner strength.

[Register Here](#)

---



## **The Two Wings of Wisdom & Bodhichitta: An Exploration of the Lam Rim**

With Ven Mary Reavey, Friday 3rd to Saturday 11th July

The Buddhist path to awakening is often described as two wings of a bird: wisdom and bodhichitta. Only when both wings are fully developed can we truly take flight. In this retreat, Ven. Mary Reavey will guide us in exploring these two essential aspects of practice. We will look more deeply into the Lamrim—the graduated path to enlightenment—focusing on cultivating wisdom and the compassionate intention of bodhichitta. The emphasis will be not only on intellectual understanding, but on using meditation to feel and experience the teachings directly, so that they become a living part of our practice.

[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:** 27th October -December 19th

**Retreat Hut 2:** 29th September - 20th October | 3rd - 19th November | 8th - 18th December

**Retreat Hut 3:** 17th - 28th October | 17th - 25th 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-

---

## A recipe from the Land of Joy kitchen



## Vegan Banoffee Pie

This vegan banoffee pie is made with delicious layers of crumbly chocolate biscuit base, caramel, bananas and whipped coconut cream.

**Prep Time** 20 minutes

**Cook Time** 10 minutes

**Resting time** 2 hours

## Equipment

- 1 22 cm (8.6in) round loose-based tart tin
- 1 Food processor optional
- 1 Large non-stick saucepan
- 1 cooking thermometer optional
- 1 Electric or hand-held whisk

## Ingredients

### For the base:

- 400 g Bourbon cream biscuits or any sweet biscuits of choice
- 100 g vegan butter (melted)

### For the filling:

- 75 g light brown soft sugar
- 75 g vegan butter
- 1 can 370g vegan condensed milk alternative
- 60 ml dairy-free cream
- 3 tablespoon cornflour
- 2 medium bananas

### For the whipped cream topping:

- 250 ml dairy-free cream chilled
- 80 g icing sugar
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder for dusting optional

## Instructions

- Place the biscuits in a food processor and whizz until you have fine crumbs. You can also crush the biscuits by hand, using rolling pin. Mix with melted vegan butter and transfer into 23 cm loose-based tart tin. Press the mixture firmly over the base and the sides of the tin, and place in the fridge for 10 minutes.
- Place the light brown sugar, vegan butter and condensed milk into a large non-stick saucepan over medium heat. In a separate small bowl or a jug, mix together the cornflour and cream until smooth, thick paste, then pour

into the saucepan with the rest of the ingredients. Allow the sugar to dissolve, then increase the heat to high and bring the mixture into rapid boil for 5 minutes, or until it reaches 115°C on a cooking thermometer, stirring at all times. Remove from the heat and cool for a couple of minutes. Pour the caramel into prepared base. Cool and refrigerate for a couple of hours, allowing the caramel to set.

- Slice the bananas and arrange them on top of the set caramel. Using an electric mixer, or hand-held whisk, mix together the chilled dairy-free cream and icing sugar until you have soft peaks (this may take up to 10 minutes). Transfer the whipped cream to a piping bag (optional) and top the pie with it. Dust the pie with some cocoa powder before serving (you can also add some chocolate shavings if you'd like).

## Notes

- Make sure to press the base and crust firmly to the base and sides of the tin. This will prevent the pie crumbling and falling apart when slicing it.
- Caramel needs at least a couple of hours in the fridge to set properly.
- The crust and the caramel filling can be prepared a day ahead and stored in the fridge.
- Storage instructions: The banoffee pie tastes best eaten fresh, on the day it was made. Store any leftovers in the fridge, in airtight container for up to 2 days.
- This banoffee pie is not suitable for freezing.



---

## Stories from Land of Joy

*We're honoured to share this series written by Land of Joy volunteer Sandeep Krishnappa, who spent forty days in a volunteer room at Land of Joy. What began as a quiet corner for rest became a mirror for awakening.*

***The Room That Teaches: A 40-Day Journey from Seeking to Seeing*** is a collection of short, luminous stories—each born from an encounter with the ordinary. A drawer. A spider. A salad bowl. Each one a window into awareness.

*This is not a book of reflections. It's a book of windows. Three minutes to read. A lifetime to live.*



### **Story 5: The Lamp That Learned to Listen**

Every night, his little lamp waits for its grand performance.  
He switches it on dramatically, as if declaring, “Let there be light!”

The lamp obliges, of course, but with quiet humour.

Tonight, he sat reading, nodding, occasionally sighing like a scholar  
discovering the  
obvious.

Then someone knocked on the door.  
He looked up, slightly annoyed, enlightenment was in progress, after all.  
It was another volunteer asking about breakfast duty.

They chatted briefly, kindly, but when the door closed, he muttered,  
“I was just getting to the good part.”

The lamp flickered once, almost in laughter.  
It knows illumination isn’t about wattage or solitude, it’s about presence.

When the knock came, light was already in the room; he’d simply forgotten  
to  
notice it was shared.

Some lights brighten rooms.  
 Others brighten moments.  
 The trick is to become both.

The lamp just keeps shining, no complaints, no applause,  
 a quiet masterclass in attention that doesn't demand to be noticed.

**Moral: When you stop demanding attention, you offer presence.**

### COMMENTARY SECTION:

The commentary sections are for those who want deeper philosophical  
 context. If  
 you prefer to stay with the stories and practices, that's perfect too.

#### **Madhyamaka Reflection: Light Without a Source**

The lamp reveals the interdependence of illumination.  
 Its glow does not arise from itself alone.  
 It depends on wire, current, eye, and the darkness it dispels.

Nāgārjuna might say:

The lamp is not inherently a lamp.  
 It is called lamp in dependence upon shadow, electricity, and the wish to  
 see.

In the same way, presence is not a personal achievement.  
 It blooms when the illusion of separation dissolves.  
 Attention is not "mine" or "yours." It is the meeting point where being and  
 seeing  
 become one continuous brightness.

When he turned from his book to the knock at the door, the field of light  
 only  
 expanded.

Nothing was lost, only shared.  
 This is the luminous aspect of emptiness, radiance that has no owner.

The lamp teaches what we forget:

You do not need to announce your light.  
Simply being attentive illuminates all around you.

**Zen Poetic Mirror: Thusness of Light**

The lamp hums softly.  
Page, breath, and silence glow together.

A knock.  
Footsteps.  
The air brightens again.

No one gives light.  
No one receives.  
Everything shines where it stands.

A flicker,  
a smile,  
a moment of listening.

Illumination happens  
when no one claims it.

---



**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!**



*Copyright © 2026 Land of Joy, All rights reserved.*

Land of Joy is a Charitable Company, Companies House number 07397643  
Charities Commission number 1138826



Affiliated with Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition  
Lama Thubten Yeshe, Founder  
Founder and Spiritual Director, Lama Zopa Rinpoche

