

UU Sangha

Journal of the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship

Spring 2022

# The Buddhist Teachings of the Four Reliances, Reflections on Compassion, and the Ukrainian War

## by Stacey Mitchell

The Four Reliances are part of the Buddhist Pali Cannon of which I refer to on my own spiritual contemplations. *The Four Reliances are 1*) *Rely on the meaning, not the words; 2*) *Rely on dharma, not on the individual (i.e. teacher); 3*) *Rely on definitive meaning, not on the provisional or interpretive meaning; and 4*) *Rely on wisdom, not the ordinary mind.* 

The Four Reliances come from the Mahayana Sutra called the Teachings of Aksayamati, who was a disciple of the Buddha. We can explore the Four Reliances a little more:

Rely on the teaching, not necessarily on the person teaching it. The understanding is yours to use at your will whether the teacher is there helping you or not. Further, your own internal wisdom when in tune with what is good directs you to good teachers who are genuinely helpful. How do we use teachings that internally guide our lives into the future, when the teacher is no longer by our side?

**Rely on the meaning, not just the literal words** (or certain phrasing of words). Once you understand the meaning, you can use as many or as little words to get your point across as you need to. Meaning is primary, the words are secondary, as there are different ways of explaining the same thing. Our existences on Earth allow for relative teachings in the moment with each person, but what we also want to see is what brings meaning that transcends these relative conditions is also just as important.

Rely on definitive meaning, not on the provisional or interpretive meaning. In relying on Sutras (Buddhist texts) passages, we can focus on where the meaning is clear and definite. Our ordinary minds tend to gravitate to a lot of things, and sometimes that information can be inconsistent or even contradictory over the years, depending on our own relative lives (yet those teachings can be immensely helpful due to our relative existence). So, where are the teachings that have an ultimate meaning in all situations?

**Rely on wisdom – not your ordinary mind (i.e. just on your thinking).** Thinking can be linear and limited. Where sometimes, you can see the answer through direct knowledge that is simple, yet sometimes, the more we think, we can go off on tangents and lose track of the big picture, and keep rationalizing to ourselves that it's correct. So, what is true no matter what the circumstances?

These reliances point ultimately to the same thing—to rely on what holds truth that matters in the spirit of wisdom, in meaning, in absolute

(Continued on page 3)

## **Guest Editor's Note**

Our Spring UU Sangha features two UU ministerial voices on contemporary issues I expect to be of significant interest to our fellowship.

In the Fall 2021 issue, Editor Florence Caplow expressed hope that stories of how three UU Buddhist meditation groups adapted to the pandemic would be "inspirational as examples of creative responses and ways of continuing sangha even in an unprecedented time." In this spirit of hope, I asked Stacey Mitchell to write for UU Sangha on the current global crisis of the Ukrainian War. We are grateful for her contribution of the first article to the Spring issue.

The second article, a sermon from 2015 by Rev. Carl Gregg, minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick (Maryland), provides an engaging introduction to influential Buddhist teachers from the Millennial Generation. The generational changes discussed are accelerating in the 2020s. We are thankful for Rev. Gregg's support to publish his work in UU Sangha. This sermon is only one of a coherent collection of over a dozen of his sermons on Buddhism/Meditation available in the Sermon Archive at <u>frederickuu.org/topical</u>.

In addition to the main articles we have a short piece of contemplative writing by Charles Suhor, the column "Thoughts from our UUBF President" by Judy Zimmerman, and a painting contributed directly by the artist Joyce Mitchell.

I wish to thank our Editor Florence Caplow, President Judy Zimmerman, and Publisher Richard Swanson for their support and guidance that made Guest editing possible. I learned so much and I trust that you, the readers, will benefit as well.

#### Gerald Bennett

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#### **Submissions**

Please send all material for *UU Sangha* to the President, Rev. Judy Zimmerman by email or mail, as you prefer. Submission implies permission to publish in the print and digital editions of *UU Sangha* and to maintain a copy in the UUBF online archive. Copyright is retained by the authors, artists, and other copyright holders. truth, and in the teachings of the dharma. Examples of these teachings and wisdom include compassion, a wish for peace, and absolute love for all that lives. Our reactions, our judgements, and our rational thoughts can lead to harm (such as war), which are all discursive thoughts that point us to harmful karmic action, which is to be avoided.

# How do these teachings lead us to see how we might engage in the world?

We are sometimes helpless of what happens in the outer world, but we have the power to inquire into our minds, the seeing deeply into how we engage in the world, and the power to change those thoughts, those judgements, those actions, that work towards compassion, and towards peace in our own lives. Without working on those things for ourselves, it becomes impossible to manifest those good qualities outside ourselves.

Some would say that the Four Reliances are a fundamental teaching of the Buddha, as a foundation to understand the meaning of Buddha's teachings.

Literal translation of the word *dharma* in Sanskrit is "to hold," "to support," or "law." Dharma is known as the teachings of the Buddha. We can think of this literal translation of the dharma as what supports reality, or how to hold reality. Hence, dharma is the foundation of how we hold and support our experiences. But 16,000 pages of the Pali Canon is going to include a lot of concepts. With each unique person, there are a host of subjective experiences, as we are at different points in our formation of this physical life, whether by age, or other circumstances. Hence, there are different ways to share experiences of one's own truths. A good teaching to someone one might need to have a different approach with another person.

In teachings, the ultimate (or definitive) point of view is ideally pointed to. I think that may be one reason why the Dalai Lama focuses so much on the teachings of kindness and compassion, as these are all ultimate ideal states for anyone, anywhere, and at any time. We all ultimately want peace, kindness, and compassionate action, but depending on a situation that can manifest in many ways. If a little child is about to burn themselves on a stove, a compassionate approach is to quickly pull the child from the stove. The child, in the moment of sudden language and movement, might not see the actions of the parent as compassionate, but that is indeed what it is and with reflection in time, the child will see that. The most compassionate approach to being with a dying elderly parent that you wish to remain in contact with may be to forgive trivial things in life. Maybe there are people in our lives when reconnection doesn't feel safe, then compassion with oneself is just as important, yet making sure we don't add negativity to an already harmful or terrible situation might be all that is necessary in a situation.

One of the main concerns in society right now is the war on Ukraine and human suffering that is occurring there. As the war in the Ukraine increases suffering in violent actions, many are understandably grieving the large loss of life there—civilians, children, hospitals, as nothing has been off limits in this war Putin is unleashing.

Regardless of our religion, the suffering in Ukraine (and anywhere there is the suffering of war) is palpable and assaults our ethics in what is good, what is right, and what is just in this world. In Buddhism, one of the main teachings is to sit with the suffering, as there really isn't any other option—we can't ignore it, or hope it will go away without action. Yet we seem to be powerless, except we do have power over our own minds, as is the case with human life. So, how do we wish to relate to our minds?

A word found in Buddhism a lot is the word "bodhicitta." Bodhicitta means enlightened mind. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche state in <u>The Buddhist</u> <u>Path: A Practical Guide from the Nyingma</u> <u>Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism</u> (Snow Lion, 2010):

"The root of bodhicitta is compassion. Compassion is feeling, deep in your heart, the suffering of others and wishing for them to be free from all pain. The root of compassion is lovingkindness, which is the feeling of wanting to replace suffering with happiness and peace. Having true love and compassion for everyone is the most precious practice of the dharma (removes ignorance and reveals wisdom). Without this, your practice will remain superficial." (33)

Questions that we can invite ourselves to ask:

How can the teachings of the Four Reliances be applied to everyday life at any time to develop aspects in what brings meaning to our own lives?

What teachings do we wish to learn, where is the important meaning in those teachings to bring purpose to our lives?

Where can we seek definitive meaning within our own wisdom?

How can living a more compassionate life be a seed planted for more compassion to spread in this fragile world?

Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche encourage us to act with wisdom and compassion based on definitive teachings of the Buddha, as they state "It is important to know the value and qualities of beneficial thoughts and then to practice them. Love and compassion don't develop by just talking about them, they are attitudes that have to be practiced. Whenever you practice meditation, it is important to begin with the intention to become enlightened for the sake of others." (39)

May we practice compassion with others in our lives and bring collective wisdom on Earth, and by doing so, may we see the contribution that we offer to the world in the spirit of peace. And may those drops of small and great acts of compassion add to an overflowing pool of love for Ukraine that may be felt and heard across this Earth.

**Stacey Mitchell** is a Candidate for Ministry with Unitarian Universalism, recently completing her

M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary. She currently serves as Chaplain Resident at University Medical Center New Orleans. Stacey's career, before engaging in Unitarian Universalism



ministry, has included working for the international peace organization The Fellowship of Reconciliation, serving as Head of Finance for a well-known Buddhist monastery in Canada, and working for the environmental group the Sierra Club. Stacey also has been a practicing Buddhist for 15 years. She is inspired by nature including the animal kingdom, gardens, wilderness, beaches, and rivers.

# From Baby Boomer Buddhism to Lodro Rinzler's Millennial Hipster Buddhism: Insights for Modern Life

**by The Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg** 22 November 2015 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick, Maryland

I first learned about Lodro Rinzler through his *Huffington Post* online Buddhist advice column that at one time was called "What Would Sid Do?" 'Sid' is Rinzler's nickname for Siddhartha Gautama, the name of the historical Buddha. Some classic "What Would Sid Do?" posts include:

- "Buddhism and Dating: Would Sid Join Match.com?"
- "Buddhism and Alcohol: Is There Such a Thing as 'Right Drinking'?"
- "Buddhism and Activism: How Would Sid Produce Social Change?",
- "Buddhist Breakup Advice," and
- "The Four Gates of Speech: Is It Really a Good Idea to Call the Ex?"

Rinzler (1982 - ), at thirty-three years-old, is an example of the increasing number of Buddhist teachers from the Millennial generation (born in the early 1980s through the early 2000s). Other fascinating Millennial Buddhist teachers include Vincent and Emily Horn, who are part of the team behind Buddhist Geeks, which explores the "convergence of Buddhism with rapidly evolving technology and an increasingly global culture."

I don't want to overemphasize Generational Theory, but we do have different concerns at different times in our lives, and the culture in which we are raised does shape us. And before I proceed to focus on how insights from Lodro Rinzler might help us integrate Buddhist practices into our lives in the world of today, I would like to invite us to briefly reflect on the range of Buddhist teachers in the world today — with the caveat that the following is not even close to a comprehensive list.

Some of our most well-known and respected Buddhist teachers for us in the West are from the Silent Generation (born from 1925 - 1942). Thich Nhat Hanh (1926 - ) is among the oldest at almost age 90. The Dalai Lama (1935 - ), Pema Chödrön (1936 - ), and Sylvia Boorstein (1936 - ) are all around 80.

And there is a sense in which they have a different style and presence than the more "hippie"influenced cohort of Baby Boomer Buddhist teachers, born following World War II (1946 -1964), who are now almost all in their 60s: Jack Kornfield (1945 - ), Lama Surya Das (1950 - ), Sharon Salzberg (1952 - ), Tara Brach (1953 - ), and Stephen Batchelor (1953 - ).

For quite some time, we have also seen Gen Xers (born from the early 1960s through the early 1980s) coming onto the Buddhist teaching scene, such as Adyashanti (1962 - ), Daniel Ingram's "Mastering the Core Teachings of the Buddha: An Unusally Hardcore Dharma Book", and Ethan Nichtern, who heads up the <u>Interdependence Project</u> in New York City.

For those of you drawn to Buddhism, I have traced this generational sketch of Buddhist teachers to invite you to consider which Buddhist teachers you have read most. Are they all of one or two generations? I invite you to consider how your understanding of Buddhism might broaden through dipping into some of the leading voices of other Buddhist generations, as well as the perennial challenge of exploring some of the early and historic Buddhist texts throughout the past 2,500 years since the life of the historical Buddha.

But for now, to turn our attention to the Millennial, hipster Buddhism of Lodro Rinzler, he is quite prolific, managing to publish at the impressive rate of slightly more than one book per year since 2012: <u>The Buddha Walks Into a Bar: A Guide</u> to Life for a New Generation (2012)

<u>Walk Like a Buddha: Even If Your</u> <u>Boss Sucks, Your Ex Is Torturing You & You're</u> <u>Hungover Again</u> (2013)

<u>The Buddha Walks into the Office: A</u> <u>Guide to Livelihood for a New Generation</u> (2014a)

<u>Sit Like a Buddha: A Pocket Guide to</u> <u>Meditation</u> (2014b)

<u>How to Love Yourself (and Sometimes</u> <u>Other People): Spiritual Advice for Modern</u> <u>Relationships</u> (2015), co-written with Meggan Watterson

Rinzler seeks to write from his own experience about the real-life concerns facing Buddhist practitioners here in the early twenty-first century.

Almost all of the most-famous Baby Boomer Buddhist teachers were adult converts to Buddhism, traveled to the East to learn from the great masters, then came back home to integrate Eastern wisdom with Western lifestyles. In contrast, Rinzler — and quite a few others of the latest generations of Buddhist teachers — are not adult converts to Buddhism. They were instead raised by Western Buddhist parents. Rinzler was born into a Western-style Buddhism that previous generations had to struggle to make possible.

Rinzler is also an interesting case study of one example of what can happen through introducing Buddhism into parenting. His first experience with meditating was at age six, but he writes that he didn't really take meditation seriously until he was a teenager. When he was a junior in high school, his parents said, "You know what would make for a great college essay? Spending your summer at this monastery." They handed him a brochure for Gampo Abbey, a Shambhala monastery in rural Nova Scotia, where Pema Chödrön is the resident teacher. So during the summer before his senior year in high school, Rinzler shaved his head, donned traditional robes, took temporary monastic vows, and entered a silent month-long retreat.

The good news, he writes, is that his parents were right: the experience "did make for a great essay"—he got into Wesleyan. The bad news, depending on your perspective, "is that they had created a monster." Successfully convincing your seventeen-year-old to spend a month meditating seems like a solid parenting win, and it was in many respects. But Rinzler says that:

"it shaped my experience such that all I wanted to do in my four years at college was meditate, study the dharma, and meditate some more. [He] started a meditation group at Wesleyan University, which then became Buddhist House, a communal living and meditation space on campus. [His] first job out of college was running a meditation center in Boston. It's only progressed from there" (2013:4).

In the experience of Rinzler and others who have dived deeply into Buddhist practices, the first stage a meditator moves through is often along the lines of "Where did all these thoughts come from?" After a while, one progresses to the second stage of, "This thing actually helps me a little," which, Rinzler jokes, can evolve into "Meditation is like crack" in which some practitioners want to commit deeply to meditation because they are experiencing how powerfully transformative it can be (2012:9). A regular meditation routine cannot solve all your problems, but meditation has been proven to transform "your mind and heart, making them more expansive and more able to accommodate the obstacles you face on a daily basis. The more expansive your mind and heart, the more you are able to engage your world without life feeling like a battle" (2012:5).

One of the most frequent misconceptions I hear from beginning meditators is that they

experience a constant onslaught of distracting thoughts. Rest assured: that's normal. It is no more realistic to think that anyone could achieve twenty minutes of uninterrupted concentration on one's breath the first few times you sit on a meditation cushion any more than thinking you could deadlift two hundred pounds the first time you walk into a gym—or run a marathon the first time you lace up running shoes. It takes time to build up one's capacity for mindfulness and heartfulness (2012:9).

Over time, meditation practice creates increasing spaciousness around the thoughts and emotions that arise within us. According to Pema Chödrön, the invitation then becomes, "<u>Don't Bite the Hook</u>." Just because an impulse toward anger, resentment, or revenge arises doesn't mean we have to bite the hook and let it drag us through the mud. Meditation is one skillful means of increasing our ability to be *intentional* about our responses to positive and negative stimuli (2012:12). Or to use Rinzler's analogy, biting the hook is like when some incident would trigger the comic book character Bruce Banner, transforming him through rage into the Incredible Hulk: HULK SMASH! HULK ANGRY (2012:33)! What a revelation to be able to develop the capacity to not bite the hook!

A related misconception is that Buddhist Enlightenment is other-worldly and esoteric. A better translation is "Awakening." Someone who has become a Buddha (an "Awakened One") still has all the normal human experiences, but one's relationship to the stimuli around oneself is different. Anger, resentment, and jealousy will still arise, but they are met, not with habitual reactivity, but with spaciousness, compassion, and intention (2012:44).

Lodro Rinzler's evident interest in applying Buddhism to all aspects of life emerged out of his college experience of being a practicing Buddhist who was also going to parties, navigating the dating scene, and living as an adult in New York City. What you see in his books is that he does not claim to have The One Universal Right Answer of how to apply Buddhist teachings to the realities of work, sex, and family life in the twenty-first century (2014a:202). Instead, like Sid, the historical Buddha more than 2,500 years ago, he's figuring it out as he goes along in the crucible of his own firsthand experience.

There's a lot more to say, but for now, I'll give you three examples of Rinzler's suggestions for "What Would Sid Do?" - and you can discern or experiment with whether they hold up to your own experience. The first is a way of **setting an intention** for your day. Often it is helpful to pick something simple and straightforward such as "I aspire to be a bit kinder than yesterday," or "My intention is to be a bit more patient." You may want to write down your intention somewhere you will see it throughout the day. When you are ready for bed, pause to reflect on "how you did in manifesting your intention." Importantly, take time to savor your successes. Even more importantly, wherever you fell short, be gentle with yourself: practice offering yourself the same loving-kindness or patience that you are seeking to offer others (2014a:10-11).

The second is a **Buddhist approach to one's "ex,"** which could be an ex that you used to date, were partnered with, or married to:

place a picture of your ex somewhere you will see it often.... Whenever you see the face...you can think to yourself, 'I wish for your deepest wellbeing.' If that phrase doesn't ring true to you... make one up for yourself. It could be 'I wish that you find happiness' or 'I wish that you will not suffer so much'" (2014a:104).

It's important to pay attention to what feels right to you at this time in your life related to the goal you are seeking to move toward.

The third practice is called **"Six Words of Advice"** because the original Tibetan text is only six words long:

Don't recall. Don't imagine. Don't think. Don't examine. Don't control. Rest. There are times when recalling, imagining, thinking, examining, and controlling are all good, positive, and desirable ways of being in the world. But the "Six Words of Advice" practice reminds us that there are also times when we need to let go of concerns about the past and future and open ourselves compassionately to whatever is arising and passing away in each moment.

A more expansive translation is:

Let go of what has passed. Let go of what may come. Let go of what is happening now. Don't try to figure anything out. Don't try to make anything happen. Relax, right now, and rest. (2014a:184)

One promise of Buddhism is increasing inner freedom. The first five of the six words encourage us to let go of various aspects of our existence that can bind us, constrict us, or which we can find ourselves grasping out of habit. After we practice letting go, the sixth and final word gives us something to do: nothing. "Simply relax, right now, and rest." Thich Nhat Hanh calls this becoming a "business-less person" with "nothing to do and nowhere to go."

I invite you to experiment with saying the six words for yourself:

Let go of what has passed.

Let go of what may come.

Let go of what is happening now.

Don't try to figure anything out.

Don't try to make anything happen.

Relax, right now, and rest.

Try repeating these words a few times silently. Then allow yourself to rest in the present moment. **Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg** has been the minister at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick (Maryland) since 2012. He holds a Doctor of Ministry and a Diploma in the Art of Spiritual Direction from



San Francisco Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School, and a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Philosophy (*cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa*) from Furman University. He has been a full-time minister since his ordination in 2003, and served two congregations prior to UUCF. He is part of a Meditation Teacher Training through Buddhist Geeks <u>buddhistgeeks.org</u> and is a Featured Blogger on Patheos <u>patheos.com/blogs/</u> <u>carlgregg</u>. Carl was married in 2007 to Magin LaSov Gregg. They have two cats (Kol Nidre and Shamash) and two dogs (Dobby and Scout).



Artist Unidentified (Burmese), 18th century. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of William E. Huntington in memory of Alice Pike Barney

# Wild Flower, Gnat, and Wheelbarrow: The Range of Dharmic Insight

### by Charles Suhor

For over thirty years I've treasured being a UU congregant and Buddhist practitioner. Unitarian Universalism claims a humanistic breadth that often shines dimly in UU Buddhism. Our faith is deeply enriched by the spiritual insights of poets, philosophers, theologians, and artists from widely diverse secular and religious traditions. I'd like to share a sample of insightful quotations from wide-ranging sources that in my view evoke a sense of unity, of the One Taste of the dharma.

Many of the writers find nature as a portal to this unity, but it's accessible in the arts and even in everyday perceptions as mundane as "a red wheelbarrow," for "deep down things"... "everything is nourishment"..."is holy."

Blake: "To see a World in a Grain of Sand /And a Heaven in a Wild Flower/Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand /And Eternity in an hour."

Tennyson: "Flower in a crannied wall, if I could understand/What you are, root and all...I should know what God and man is."

Kabuki Takahashi: "A pine needle /in an ocean of trees./Timeless serenity/of this very moment."

Merton: "This flower, this light, this moment, this silence"—Dominos est, eternity."

The Buddha: "If we could see the miracle of a single flower clearly, our whole life would change."



Canyon Wren-NPS Andrew Kuhn

Hopkins: "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things."

Rumi: "The particular glows with the universal."

Thoreau: Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy and befriended me."

Mary Oliver: "Everything is nourishment somehow or another."

Rumi: "A tiny gnat's outward form /flies about in pain and wanting,/while the gnat's inward nature/ includes the entire galactic /whirling of the universe."

Merton: "Everything that is, is holy."

Emily Dickinson: "The Murmur of a Bee/A Witchcraft yieldeth me —/If any ask me why — 'Twere easier to die —/Than tell."

Mary Oliver: "The witchery of living/ is my whole conversation/ with you, my darlings./ All I can tell is what I know"

Michael Eigen: "Words—whatever else they are are gateways to the wordless." William Carlos Williams: "So much depends/ upon /a red wheel/ barrow/ glazed with rain/ water/ beside the white/chickens."

Thich Nhat Hanh: "By touching deeply the wave, you touch the water."

**Charles Suhor** is a member of the UU Fellowship of Montgomery, Alabama, where he has led meditation and philosophy groups. His writings have appeared in UU Sangha, Mindfulness Bell, Inquiring Mind, Insight, AHP (Association for Humanistic Psychology) Perspective, Education Week, Religion and Public Education, and others.

## **Thoughts from our UUBF President**

When I was a child one of my favorite toys was a rubber-like, bendable Gumby action figure. Some of us might know Gumby as a frequent visitor in Our Whole Lives (OWL) religious education classes. They could roll into a ball and enter any storybook. Gumby could morph into all kinds of shapes as the storyline demanded. That kind of flexibility has been needed during these last two and a half years. It was shown once again when this year's Convocation had to be postponed.

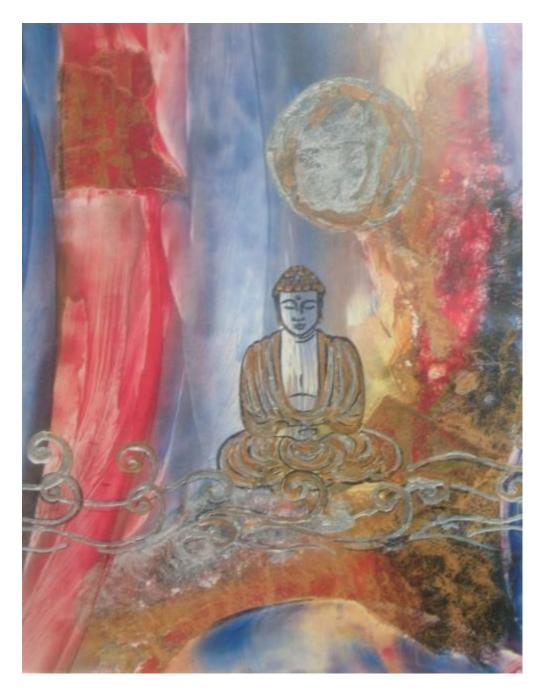
Convocation teacher 2022 David Loy kindly agreed to offer a half-day retreat. On March 19 over one hundred participants gathered online for "The Refuge of No Refuge: Staying Un/Grounded in a World that Seems to be Falling Apart." David's exposition of how the path is like falling out of an airplane without a parachute, where there is no ground, offered ways into developing understanding of the self, and letting go of our grip on our conventional conceptualization of it. David's teachings shared how this unclouded view might support work around climate change. So does having a strong spiritual basis for social and environmental justice work. David elaborated on Robert Thurman's comment of how there is talk about Buddhist *practice*, but when is the *performance* ? David stressed that the performance is *activism* and that meditation and other forms of Buddhist practice support skillful means of addressing the profound ecological crises we are facing. Those skillful means involve walking what he called the "ecosattva" path.

There will be an opportunity to experience David's teachings in greater depth April 27-30 2023, when Convocation meets at the beautiful DeKoven Center on the shores of Lake Michigan. David Loy will be the lead teacher. The Convocation will feature daily meditation sessions, affinity group meetings, and small group discussion times. Registration and other details will be posted to the UUBF website and Facebook group in fall this year.

UUBF will be staffing a booth in the Exhibit Hall Area at General Assembly when the Unitarian Universalist Association meets June 22-26. This year's GA will occur in multi-platform mode. The UUBF Booth will be available online (as will all Exhibit booths) and in-person. If you're attending GA in Portland, Oregon please stop by. There will be a meditation area, short video teachings to watch, books by UUBF authors, and flyers about Convocation 2023. There will be a raffle for a free Convocation registration, too. If you're connected with a practice group, please update your group's listing by visiting the booth. Materials to renew your UUBF membership will be on hand. I look forward to meeting up with you.

Yours in the UU Dharma,

*Rev. Judy Zimmerman* UUBF President



*Zazen,* 2009 Joyce Mitchell; Encaustic Medium (pigments with melted wax)

Joyce Mitchell, 81 years old and living in the Seattle area, has been involved in painting or other forms of art since the 1960s. About her life as an artist she says, "I believe that the purpose of art is to bring more life --- life for both the artist and the viewer. Art is the very soul of a society. Life and matter are energy, vibration. A pattern of color creates a vibrational pattern for the artist and viewer to experience. I hope you enjoy and resonate with this expression of my soul food."

UU Sangha

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The Buddhist Teachings of the Four Reliances, Reflections on Compassion, and the Ukrainian War by Stacey Mitchell Page 1

Guest Editor's Note by Gerald Bennett Page 2

From Baby Boomer Buddhism to Lodro Rinzler's Millennial Hipster Buddhism: Insights for Modern Life by Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg Page 5

Wild Flower, Gnat, and Wheelbarrow: The Range of Dharmic Insight by Charles Suhor Page 9

Thoughts from our UUBF President by Judy Zimmerman Page 10

Zazen, Painting by Joyce Mitchell Page 11