



# IMPACT

2024



SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER



# SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER IMPACT 2024

At San Francisco Zen Center, we are more committed than ever to extending the reach of our offerings and honoring the legacy of our founder, Shunryu Suzuki Roshi.

In this issue, we share stories about:

- The expanding reach and growth of the SFZC Online Temple
- The renewal of Beginner's Mind Temple, our beloved 100-year-old Julia Morgan building in San Francisco
- Sustaining our buildings and infrastructure

Your generous support, dedication, and deep trust in the Dharma has made all this possible.



# ONLINE ZENDO

## Where we were

**225** views per month  
on YouTube

---

**175** guests

Prior to the pandemic, SFZC provided free livestreamed access to Saturday Dharma talks at City Center and an occasional online component of a City Center practice period. When lockdown began in 2020, we recognized the importance for more community connection and officially launched our fourth temple—the Online Zendo—which continues to this day.

**In October 2022, we received approximately 225 views per month on YouTube from about 175 guests; at that time, we were posting just a few videos per year.**

# ONLINE ZENDO

## Where we are now

**6,800** views per month  
on YouTube

**5,000** guests

**As of October 2024, we receive approximately 6,800 views per month on YouTube from about 5,000 guests. Currently, we consistently post 15–20 videos per month.**

According to Director of Online Content Dan Gudgel, “We’ve learned a lot about creating an online zendo! In addition to Saturday’s Dharma talk, we now regularly livestream the Wednesday Dharma talk from City Center and the Sunday talk from Green Gulch Farm. We also continue to broadcast morning and evening zazen live from the City Center zendo.”

We’ve received a lot of excellent feedback about the increased accessibility of the Dharma from all over the world. We now have a better understanding of running an Online Zendo, from the challenges (the need for increased staff and volunteer time) to the costs (purchasing professional sound equipment) to what kind of offerings work best online.





## Words from the Sangha

“I reached out to the SFZC Online Sangha during a time when I felt all was lost, including my willingness to practice. I found refuge at City Center and am grateful in body, heart and mind.”

“Thank you for this open and welcoming community. I am grateful for this space and the teachings that have been shared with me.”

# ONLINE ZENDO

## Where we are headed

As we make plans to physically move back into the Buddha Hall at City Center in January 2025, we will continue providing morning and evening zazen and services, Dharma talks, and Practice Periods, plus more group practice sessions and sangha check-in opportunities.

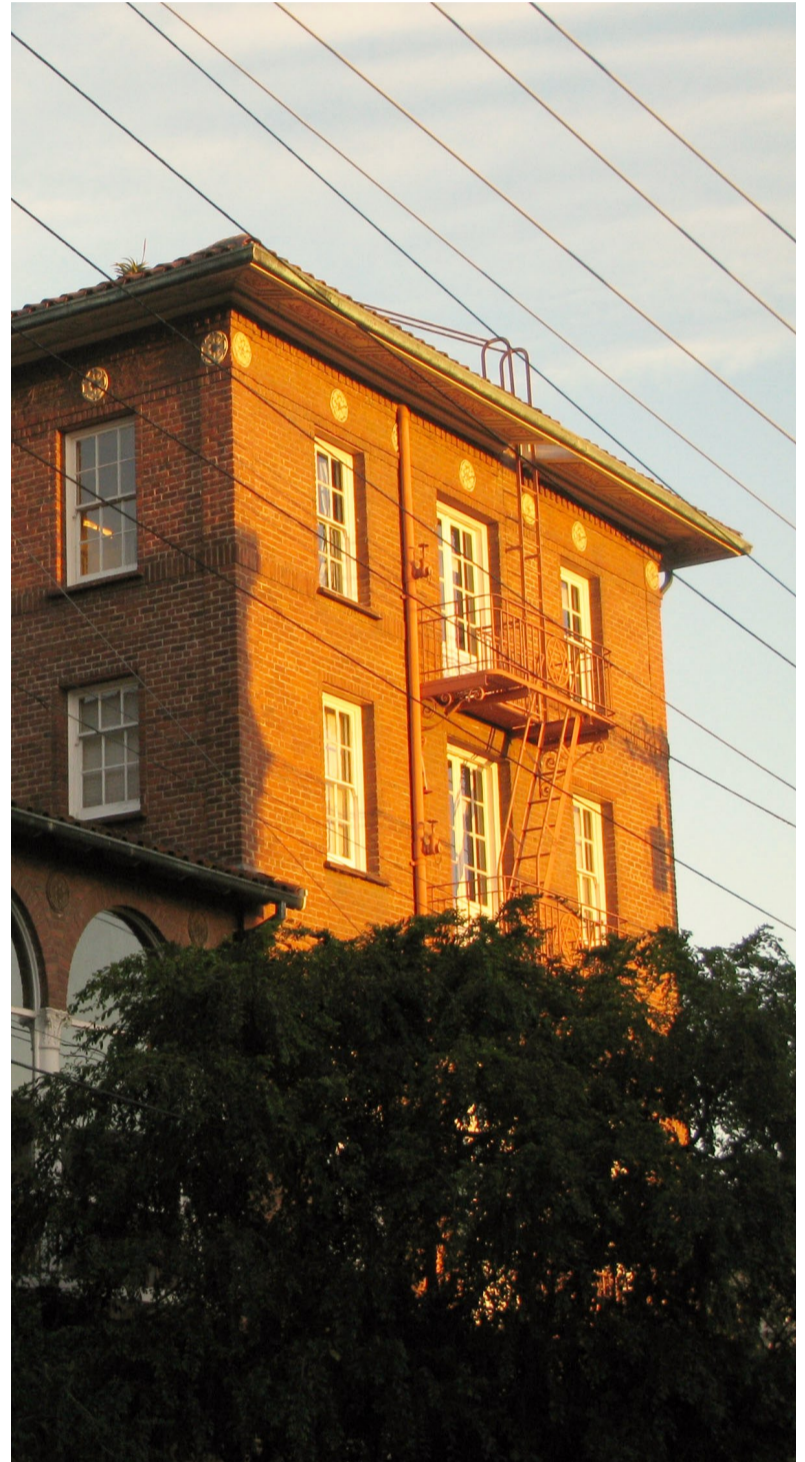
We also are increasing the SFZC YouTube channel’s archives from Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, as well as luminaries such as the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh, and archival videos of many former SFZC abbots going back to the earliest days of San Francisco Zen Center.

# CITY CENTER RENEWAL

## Where we were

Our beloved 100-year-old Julia Morgan building in San Francisco has been home to SFZC since 1969 when Shunryu Suzuki Roshi established it as a training center in the Soto Zen tradition. A much-needed renovation was planned for 2020 with upgrades and improvements to make the building more functional, beautiful, and accessible. The renovation committee, architect Studio Bondy, and Herrero Builders established the scope of the project:

- A Welcome Center replacing the lobby entrance with more space to greet guests and invite them in to share the Dharma
- Restoring and making major improvements to the antiquated communal bathrooms
- Adding a new ramp to the bookstore and an elevator for better accessibility throughout the building
- Installing heating and ventilation in the zendo



Unfortunately, the pandemic pushed our start date to January 2024, and with ballooning renovation and construction costs in San Francisco, we knew the longer we put off the project, the more expensive it would become.



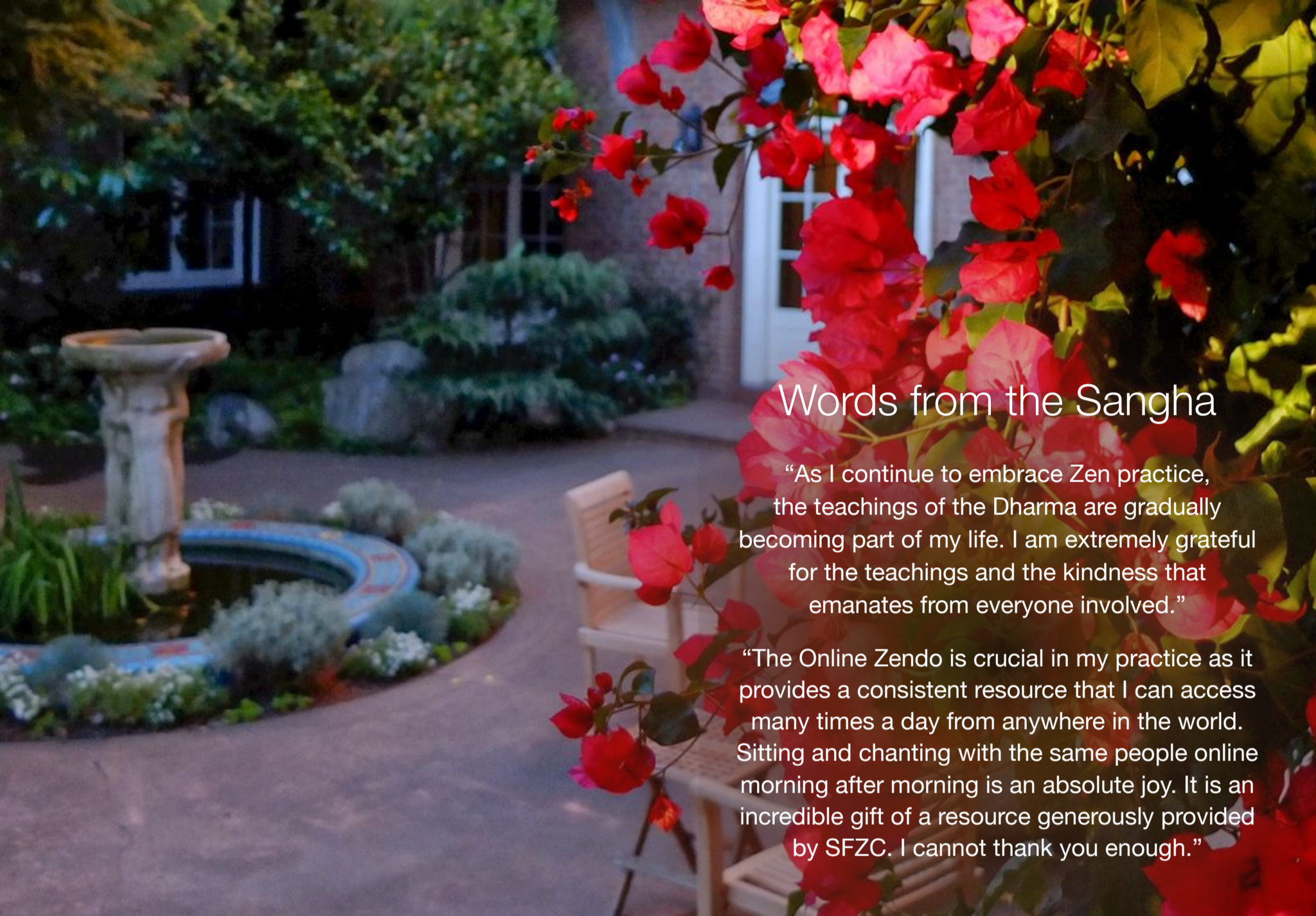
# CITY CENTER RENEWAL

## Where we are now

Not only did we end up doing more than we had planned, but we will finish on time! The scope increased as we found additional work that needed to be done, such as the discovery of profound deterioration of concrete throughout the building.

City Center Director Choku Proudfoot says Herrero has been a dream to work with: “Our collaboration began with a sharing of values to ensure that we stayed aligned throughout the project, and their team noted how much fun they had working on site. Their curiosity and interest in temple life truly made them part of our sangha this past year.”

Throughout all of this, City Center stayed open and available for zazen, Dharma talks, affinity groups, classes, and workshops to maintain (and increase in some cases!) our offerings, both in person and online.



## Words from the Sangha

“As I continue to embrace Zen practice, the teachings of the Dharma are gradually becoming part of my life. I am extremely grateful for the teachings and the kindness that emanates from everyone involved.”

“The Online Zendo is crucial in my practice as it provides a consistent resource that I can access many times a day from anywhere in the world. Sitting and chanting with the same people online morning after morning is an absolute joy. It is an incredible gift of a resource generously provided by SFZC. I cannot thank you enough.”

# CITY CENTER RENEWAL

## Where we are headed

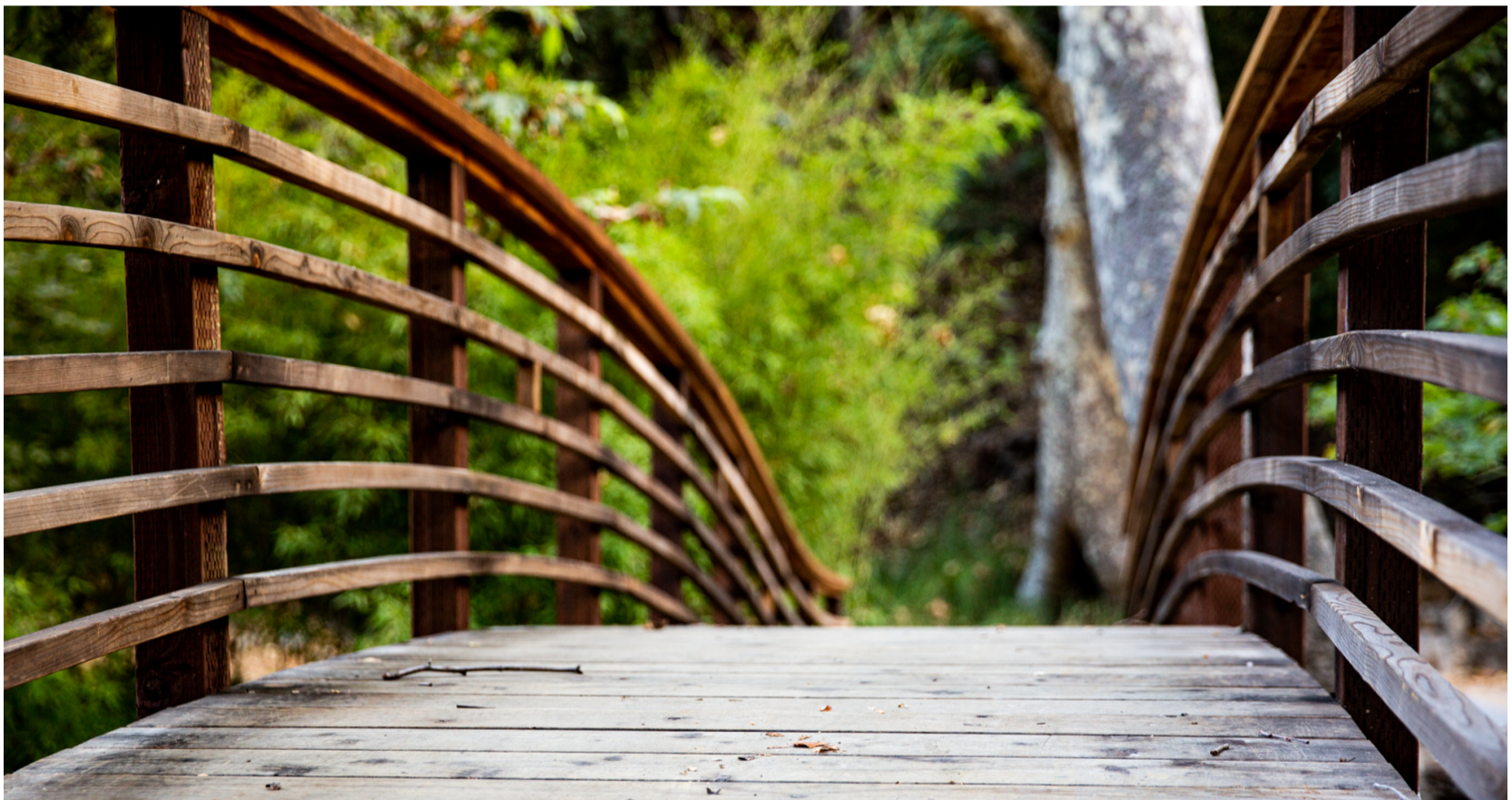
There are projects that remain, but now is the time to celebrate the immense amount of work that has been completed. We can't wait for the sangha to experience the new Welcome Center on the main floor, flooded with sunlight through four grand arched windows that until now have been hidden. This open and inviting area will be available for all to share a cup of tea, host book readings, and more. The vitality of our community will be celebrated in 2025 with some planned gatherings, so we hope you will join us at an upcoming party and rededication in the new year.



# SFZC TEMPLE STEWARDSHIP

## Where we were

SFZC is blessed with three outstanding locations, each with its own character and identity. In San Francisco our newly renovated Julia Morgan building sits among three Victorian flats and a 100-year-old apartment building, offering Dharma and refuge in a vibrant urban setting.



Heading north into Marin County, the bucolic fields of Green Gulch Farm touch the Pacific Ocean while the enormous Japanese bell (bonsho) signals it's time for a Dharma talk in the zendo. And all the way south to Monterey County, just over the mountains from Big Sur, is Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery, where dozens of cabins, a zendo, kitchen, retreat hall, bath house, and founder's hall line the banks of Tassajara Creek, sheltering monks and guests alike and bringing forth the rare chance to unplug completely from the busy world.

As our buildings and infrastructure age, SFZC has recognized that deferred repairs cannot be deferred forever and that we're never really done with maintenance—a true example of impermanence. Over the years, long-range plans and priorities have been discussed and, in some cases, implemented.

# SFZC TEMPLE STEWARDSHIP

## Where we are now

While Green Gulch Farm has added and updated several buildings over the years, there are numerous infrastructure projects that need attention. Top of the list are watershed issues, farm related repairs, and lowering our carbon footprint, as well as an urgent need to repave and upgrade the entry road and retaining wall.



At Tassajara we've also added new structures and made various modifications to the bathhouse to make it more accessible. The temple as a whole is working towards being less dependent on fossil fuels. As we look forward, we know we'll need more clean energy, improvements in technology, roofing, foundation, electrical, plumbing, and an increased septic capacity to meet the needs of guests and residents.

The renovation of 300 Page Street, the anchor building of City Center, is a beautiful achievement. Now we must turn towards our additional buildings, all of which are over 100 years old and are struggling with years of deferred maintenance.



## Words from the Sangha

“Thank you for all your teachings and practice! A big bow to the beautiful interconnected Sangha.”

“With deep gratitude for SFZC for being a welcoming spiritual home and providing timeless essential teachings that are more important than ever.”

# SFZC TEMPLE STEWARDSHIP

## Where we are headed

With our ever-changing needs, San Francisco Zen Center is committed to remaining wise and responsible stewards of our facilities. We have created a full-time Facilities Director position, held by City Center resident Shoko Hollingsworth, to oversee all three locations and to manage budgets and priorities. Additionally, SFZC is creating an endowment fund for infrastructure improvements to ensure the longevity, safety, and functionality of our temples.

According to Shoko, “Long-term sustainability is our overall goal, so creating a long-term plan with steady and reliable funding will address pressing needs. We have the vision. We have the team to make it happen. And more than ever we have the commitment to ensure that there will always be a place for the Dharma to flourish.”



# THANK YOU

Together we engage and build community.

Your support makes this possible.

Our minds and hearts express the fullness of our gratitude.

Deep bow.



SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER



## Photo credits

in order of appearance:

- Page 1 Green Gulch Farm apples:  
**Alison Bank**
- Page 2 Green Gulch Zendo Jizo:  
**Shundo David Hays**
- Page 3 Online Zendo:  
**Chris Shelton**
- Page 5 City Center Zendo:  
**Bill Baker**
- Page 6 City Center in morning light:  
**Shundo David Hays**
- Page 7 City Center courtyard:  
**Chris Shelton**
- Page 8 City Center courtyard:  
**Shundo David Hays**
- Page 9 Tassajara bridge:  
**Erin Scott**
- Page 10 Tassajara cabins:  
**Erin Scott**
- Page 11 Green Gulch Farm altar:  
**Margo Moritz**
- Page 12 Tassajara altar:  
**David Silva**
- Page 13 Tassajara stairs:  
**Erin Scott**
- Page 14 Tassajara creek:  
**Tasja Keetman**



SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER