

## Welcome to Our Zendo

The Iron Bell Zendo brings Soto Zen Buddhism to the Sacramento community. Our Monday evening meetings and other events provide an opportunity to meditate, study Buddhist teachings, and enjoy the fellowship of *sangha*, (community of practitioners) practicing together with others.

Soto Zen was established in Japan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by Dogen Zenji, after he returned from his study of traditional Chan in China.

## Our Lineage

Iron Bell Zendo follows the Soto Zen practice established by Shunryu Suzuki after he arrived in San Francisco in 1958. During the next two decades, San Francisco Zen Center, Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery and Green Gulch Farm Zen Center were created through his inspiration. The lectures recorded in his book, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, provide an excellent starting point for anyone wishing to explore Suzuki's teaching.



## Teaching

Face-to-face teaching is an integral part of Soto Zen practice. Once or twice per month, a priest in Suzuki Roshi's lineage visits the zendo to lead meditation and offer teachings. Periodically, teachers offer classes of four to six weeks' duration, as well as half- and one-day retreats. Visiting teachers also offer *dokusan* (personal meetings), which provide an opportunity for individual practice instruction and dialogue. *Dokusan* can be scheduled on Monday afternoons prior to the evening meditation session or occasionally on Sunday, depending on the teacher's availability.

**Myo Denis Lahey** is the guiding teacher for Iron Bell Zendo. Rev. Myo became interested in Zen as a teenager and started full-time residential practice at the San Francisco Zen Center in 1982. He received dharma transmission from Tenshin Reb Anderson in 1999 and served as head of practice at Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery from 2000 - 2002. He is now teacher-in-residence at Hartford Street Zen Center in San Francisco. (<http://www.hszc.org/>)

**Jim Hare** serves as *Ino* (Zendo Director) and leads the Monday evening meditation and discussions alternately with visiting teachers. Jim lived in the San Francisco Zen Center community in the early 1980s and was lay-ordained by Tenshin Reb Anderson in 1985. He was head student during the spring 2002 practice period at Green Dragon Temple (Green Gulch Farm) in Marin County.

## Zendo Forms

Upon entering the room, we remove our shoes and leave them in the shoe cases along the back wall.

*Zafus* (meditation cushions) are set up as they would be in a traditional Japanese temple, and they define the meditation area. We begin entering this area as we arrive so that everyone will be seated at 7:00 p.m., leaving "extras" such as water bottles, purses and coats outside the meditation area.

The big square cushion is called a *zabutan*, the round cushion is called a *zafu*. Small square support cushions are also available. You are invited to use the zendo's meditation cushions or bring your own. Chairs are available if you do not wish to sit on a cushion.

The altar holds a statue of Buddha, or sometimes Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (Kuan-Yin), a statue of Manjusri (the bodhisattva of wisdom), incense, a candle and flowers.

The *doan*, (bell ringer) uses bells and wooden clackers to signal the beginning and end of sitting and walking meditation, and at various times during the service.

Chant books are passed out during the service portion of the evening and collected again at the conclusion of the service.

Announcements made at the end of the evening inform the *sangha* of upcoming Zendo events. Anyone is welcome to make an announcement.

## Meditation Practice Sessions

The Iron Bell Zendo meets weekly on Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. at the Yoga Solution, 887 57<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite B, Studio 1, Sacramento.

The monthly schedule offers a variety of formats which include periods of silent *zazen* (sitting meditation), *kinhin* (walking meditation), dharma talks by visiting teachers or senior members, discussion periods and meditation instruction. A service with bowing and chanting is a regular part of the evening. In addition, special ceremonies are performed throughout the year. A printed calendar may be picked up at the back counter or viewed on our web site.

Poem by Ju-Ching (Ru Jing)

The old iron bell  
looks like a mouth agape,  
indifferent to the winds  
of the four directions.  
If you ask it about  
the meaning of wisdom,  
its only answer  
is a jingling, tinkling sound.

## Support for the Zendo

Iron Bell Zendo is maintained and supported by the *sangha*. There are no membership requirements to participate in its activities. A *dana* (generosity) basket is located near the door to accept donations in support of the rent, visits by teachers and other zendo activities. Iron Bell Zendo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible.



### Iron Bell Zendo

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# IRON BELL ZENDO

Monday Evenings  
7:00 – 8:45 p.m.

The Yoga Solution  
(In the Antique Plaza)  
Suite B, Studio 1  
887 57th Street  
Sacramento, CA