



Zen Christian Network

Practice Orientation and Operating Principles

Get Empty. Get Filled.

No-Zen to Yes-Zen

zenchristiannetwork.org

Zen Christian Network supports disciplined Zen practice among Christians and others who wish to sit without setting aside Christian faith, prayer, or formation.

ZCN helps practitioners find one another, form local sitting groups, and develop accountable forms of shared practice.

The website includes a geolocation feature that allows members to create profiles and meet one another personally. This is central to the network's purpose: scattered practitioners should be able to find practice friends, local hosts, teachers, speakers, and possible group members.

PRACTICE AND FORMATION

ZCN is concerned with stable forms, sustained sitting, and the slow formation of attention, silence, compassion, and discernment.

TEACHERS AND OTHER FORMS OF SERVICE

ZCN honors Zen practice and the lineages that have carried it. When a person is presented as a Zen teacher, the network gives weight to recognized formation, authorization, transmission, ordination, or other transparent forms of accountability.

Other forms of service may arise from other forms of formation. Christian ministers, spiritual directors, pastoral guides, contemplative practitioners, scholars, and local facilitators may support the network without being presented as Zen teachers. Their roles should be named plainly.

CHRISTIAN ORIENTATION

ZCN is Christian in orientation, not denominational. It does not require one theological school. It does require that Christian practitioners not be asked, explicitly or implicitly, to treat Christian faith as something to be outgrown by practice.

Silence, emptiness, non-attachment, compassion, and awakening may be approached within a Christian horizon of prayer, incarnation, communion, divine fullness, and transformed life. Within ZCN, emptiness is not treated as the cancellation of fullness.

FUTURE HORIZON

ZCN may support online events, local gatherings, study-practice days, retreats, and regional practice circles. Stable local groups may, in time, mature into sangha. If Christian Zen lineage expressions emerge, they should do so through genuine practice, transmission, accountability, and the ripening of persons capable of carrying them.

DISCERNMENT

Contemplative practice can open experiences that require discernment and care. Such experiences should be met neither with dismissal nor inflation. ZCN therefore values pacing, humility, appropriate guidance, and integration. The fruit of practice is shown in stability, compassion, prayerfulness, embodied presence, and transformed life.

GOVERNANCE

ZCN should be carried forward by a board or advisory circle able to hold its purpose, standards, language, and relationships with steadiness. The structure should remain light enough for practice to grow and clear enough to prevent confusion around authority, teaching, and responsibility.

FOUNDER

ZCN was founded by Travis Wade Zinn, whose background includes Soto Zen practice in France within the Deshimaru tradition, Soto Zen practice in the United States within the Suzuki tradition, and half a year of residential monastery practice in California.

ZCN is an independent network. Participation in its work does not require agreement with the founder's personal theological positions. His role has been to establish the network so it may be carried forward by a wider circle of practitioners, teachers, contemplatives, local groups, and an appropriate board or advisory circle.