

Guidelines & Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Opening Doors to the Mysteries of the Heart

4-day Zen Retreat with James Myoun Ford, Roshi, May 23 – 16, 2019

If you haven't yet reviewed the retreat overview and information, please do so now at <http://uuchurch.org/zen/retreat>. If you still have questions after reviewing the retreat page online and the material below, please contact the retreat leader, janine.larsen@uuchurch.org or 206-454-7711.

1. Do I have to be a Buddhist or a member of UUC or WUUC to attend this retreat?

You do not have to be either Buddhism or a Unitarian Universalist (UU). Some attendees will identify as Zen Buddhists, some as UUs, some as both or neither.
2. What if I'm new to meditation, or if my practice is in some other contemplative tradition?

New meditators may want to consider part-time attendance at this retreat. Those with an established meditation practice other than Zen will do fine if you are ready to encounter new practice forms. The application asks about your meditation background. If you are new to meditation, to Zen, or to silent retreats, we'll be in touch to answer questions and advise. If you attend, you are encouraged to talk to the teacher during one-on-one meetings about how to best engage your experience. We recommend a conversation with the retreat leader before you register, if you are new to meditation or have other questions about whether this retreat is for you.
3. What should I wear?

Dress comfortably, first of all. To lessen distractions, we ask people to wear modest, subdued clothing. Black is traditional. Please do not wear noisy jewelry, shorts, sleeveless or cropped tops, low necklines, or clothing with advertising or logos. If you have any concerns about dress, ask!

Also, because many people are sensitive to scents, please avoid added fragrances (perfume, cologne, soap, hairspray or scented toiletries) before and during your attendance at the retreat.
4. Do I have to take my shoes off?

We will leave shoes outside the meditation hall. Bare feet or socks are ok. We recommend slip-on shoes or sandals so you can put them on quickly for outdoor walking during the retreat.

If you need shoes for stability in walking while in the meditation hall, please let the retreat leader know (indoor-only shoes would be appreciated if you have them).
5. How much does the retreat cost, and how do I pay?

We have set retreat fees to cover costs of the facility, meals, and travel for retreat leaders. Please choose attendance options that fit your preferences and financial means. Scholarships are also available – we'll be in touch if you indicate on your

application that you'd like to request assistance. You can pay on-line when you register, or pay when you arrive via a check (made out to UUC) or cash. Dana (offering) for our teachers and cook will also be invited. Give generously as you are able. Others will benefit from this practice.

6. How does part-time attendance work?

We hope a variety of attendance options will meet the needs of those who are unable to attend full-time, with fees adjusted accordingly. If you aren't sure, choose part-time, describe your ideal schedule, and we'll be in touch. If you find you need to adjust your commitment during the retreat, let one of the practice leaders or teachers know.

7. What about food?

All meals are vegetarian, may contain dairy and/or eggs, and may contain gluten. We will eat at tables in formal Oryoki style. If you do not own an oryoki set, you will need to bring three bowls that can stack, chopsticks (if you cannot use chopsticks, then a fork), a spoon, and a small spatula. For cloths, you will need a washcloth, a cloth napkin, and a larger cloth such as a bandana. We will provide orientation to eating in this style. You may wish to [read this introduction](#), and [watch these instructions](#). Don't worry – you'll catch on!

Snacks and coffee/ tea will be available throughout the day. If you have specific dietary needs or preferences, please let us know. Also, feel free to bring food or snacks to meet your needs, or to share on the snack table. Each dorm has a small lounge with mini-fridge, microwave, and electric kettle.

8. What are the sleeping arrangements?

Camp Huston conference center offers dormitories with bunk beds and simple foam mattresses. Please bring your own sleeping bag and pillow, or sheets & blankets. Bedding is available from the monastery at an additional cost of \$15. On the registration form, you'll be asked:

- Your choice of male or female identified dormitory*
- If you are willing to use a top bunk
- If you snore or will bring a CPAP
- If you want to rent bedding or bring your own (select "1" to indicate your choice, and leave the other set to "0." Bedding rental will be added to your balance due.)

* If you have a special need around dormitory choice, please let us know in advance so that we can talk. Options are limited at this conference center, but if we can accommodate your special need we will.

9. Do I need to bring sitting supplies?

Chairs and some floor sitting supplies are provided. You are welcome to bring your own cushions. We have a limited supply of lap blankets and support cushions; you are encouraged to bring your own to help with your comfort.

10. What is the "Zen Precepts Ceremony" all about?
This is a chance to witness a formal Zen ritual of commitment. Several retreatants, regular practitioners with Bright Cloud sitting groups, will take the first Five Precepts. Two practitioners will take Jukai (16 precepts), committing to the Empty Moon Zen lineage. The meaning will be explained as part of the ritual. Friends and family are invited to join this part of the retreat.
11. I'm from outside the Seattle area. Can I be picked up and dropped off at the airport, bus or train station?
Maybe. Please ask on your registration form, and we'll get back to you.
12. Where can I find other retreat information?
An overview of the retreat with links to on-line registration, a printable flyer, the Preliminary Schedule, teacher biographies, and resources can be found at <http://uuchurch.org/zen/retreat>. Need more info? Contact the retreat leader.

A checklist of what you need to bring

- A raincoat and/or umbrella (dorms are a short distance from meditation hall)
- Sweater or sweatshirt
- Comfortable, muted clothing.
- Slip-on shoes for walking to and from dorms
- Sturdy outside shoes for optional trail walking
- Warm slippers or socks for dorms & meditation hall
- A sleeping bag or sheets and blankets, pillow, and towels, unless renting from the conference center
- Extra blankets/ shawls to use or share in the meditation hall or dorms
- Personal toiletries and medications; shower shoes optional
- Oryoki Set (or see Meals FAQ above for how to assemble your own)
- Flashlight or charger for your phone, if using as a flashlight

What to leave at home

- Pets
- Intoxicants (alcohol, cannabis, etc.)
- Books and writing materials
- Knitting, handcrafts, musical instruments
- Email, social media, games, internet, phone calls – please refrain from using devices during this retreat

While on retreat we encourage all participants to keep cell phones and computers powered off. The retreat leader will check messages regularly, at (number to be provided to registrants at a later date). Please arrange for those who might need to contact you in case of an emergency to use this number, rather than your cell phone.