



KORINJI RINZAI ZEN MONASTERY

祖的山 光林寺

SESSHIN AT KORINJI – INFORMATION FOR GUESTS

Thank you for your interest in meditation retreats at Korinji. Our monastery is one of the few places in the West conducting Rinzai Zen sesshin in the traditional manner, and we look forward to having you with us.

Please read the following information and then submit the sesshin application by email to info@korinji.org.

What is Sesshin?

Sesshin is a period of intensive cloistered meditation retreat, and among the most rigorous of Zen training forms. For a period of four days (our beginner's Zen Life Retreat) up to seven days (called *Dai-sesshin*, or "great sesshin"), Zen students devote themselves single-mindedly to many hours of meditation practice, meeting frequently with the teacher for guidance. In this way they are able to deepen their spiritual training immeasurably, face their own limitations, and emerge with new insights for their lives.

General Information

- Sesshin is challenging: days are long and full, with many sessions of meditation and minimal sleep (4.5 hours) each night. A foundation of Zen practice experience will help you to successfully use this training. In general, before attending a seven day Dai-Sesshin you must first receive formal instruction in zazen - seated meditation - and be able to sit unmoving in meditation for multiple periods of 45 minutes in a row. Our Zen Life Retreat requires no experience, but is still challenging. If you are unsure regarding your readiness for any sesshin, please email Korinji and we will be happy to speak with you.
- Participants who have formal student-teacher relationships with other Zen teachers are requested to obtain permission from their teachers to participate.
- An adapted sesshin schedule with more sleep may be offered to seniors and other persons requiring it.
- Sesshin includes *samu* or periods of manual work practice. If you have physical limitations, you will be given work appropriate to your condition.
- Persons with physical conditions preventing them from sitting on the floor may use a chair or stool during meditation sessions. Please let us know beforehand if you require this.
- Our meals at the monastery are simple, traditional vegetarian cuisine. If you have food-related health issues or allergies, please inform us beforehand and we will determine if we are able to welcome you. Personal food is not permitted at sesshin.

Schedule and What to Bring

Sesshin begins on the first evening at 7:30pm and ends on the final evening at approximately 6pm (except for the December Rohatsu Dai-Sesshin, which lasts a little longer and ends at approximately 10am on the final morning). Please plan to arrive no later than 6:30pm on the first evening in order to have time to get settled.

Please bring the following:

- A sleeping bag and pad if you are sleeping as a guest at the monastery residence.
- Formal practice garments (gi, juban, obi and hakama for laypersons, robes for ordained) are the norm at Korinji. But if this is your first sesshin with us, please just wear whatever practice clothing you normally wear...or else modest clothing (no shorts or tank tops) in solid neutral colors, without words or printed designs. If you'd like help obtaining formal clothing email us beforehand and we can suggest sources.
- White tabi (or clean white socks): these are worn during the morning ceremony.
- Outdoor sandals or shoes that can be quickly slipped on and off, for walking between buildings.
- Clothes and footwear appropriate for outdoor work. Korinji residents wear blue zip-up coveralls.
- Warm clothing (long underwear, hat, rain jacket, etc.) and umbrella, depending on the season and weather forecast.
- Toiletries, bath towel, personal medications (if you take anything that might affect your clarity or level of drowsiness, please let us know).
- Flashlight or headlamp.
- Jihatsu (Zen eating bowls) if owned. If not, these will be available to borrow.
- Korinji Okyo book (for chanting) if owned. If not, these will be available to borrow.

What Not to Bring

- Personal phones, computers, and other electronic or entertainment devices of any kind. If you have brought these with you, you must leave them in your car. If you need to give an emergency contact number to someone, we can provide this to you; if you need to make an emergency call, our staff will have a phone you can use.
- Cameras. Taking photographs at Korinji is not permitted without prior approval.
- Books (other than standard texts used for training e.g. koan materials).
- Musical instruments.
- Personal food.
- Intoxicants or recreational drugs of any kind.
- Firearms or other weapons.

Sesshin Rules

We would like to stress that sesshin is a silent retreat and there is no "social" time. Talking is only done when necessary to accomplish some task or during permitted question/answer periods. Persons unable to observe this rule may be asked to leave Korinji.

Couples participating in sesshin will not be able to have private time together apart from the group. Please note that romantic display and sexual activity are not appropriate on the Korinji grounds.

In general, it will help to remember that Korinji is a monastery and therefore a place dedicated to Zen practice. All other concerns, relationships and activities should be set aside during sesshin.

Traveling and Arriving

The closest airport to Korinji is Madison, Wisconsin (MSN). This is about 50 miles away. We regret that we cannot provide transportation, so please determine the best way to arrive at Korinji on your own.

Korinji's parking lot address is S470 Hirst Road, Reedsburg, WI. Google Maps or a similar service will give you good directions to Korinji.

When you arrive at this address you will not see buildings from the road; you will only see forest and a blue sign "S470". Next to the sign is a short gravel drive opening up to a parking area. Please enter there and park your car in a manner that allows other vehicles to do the same. DO NOT park on the side of the road anywhere: you will be towed by the county.

After parking, walk to the trail which begins at the back of the parking area. This will take you through the forest to the Korinji gate and up to the monastery buildings. Follow the signs there to the residence entrance. Walk carefully, as the forest trail is sometimes uneven and can be slippery depending on conditions. If you arrive after dark you should use a flashlight.

If your physical condition prevents you from walking short distances, please let us know before you arrive and we will arrange to meet you at our service entrance.

Regarding Covid-19 and other Contagious Diseases

The Korinji Foundation cannot guarantee that its residents, volunteers, partners, guests, or others in attendance at events or activities will not become infected with COVID-19 or other contagious diseases. The health of all attendees, which may include elderly persons and others at risk, is our priority. The following guidelines will be enforced.

Four categories of concern are specified. Persons who fall under #1 below will not be permitted to enter the monastery grounds. Persons who fall under categories #2-4 must consult with Korinji before arriving, to determine if entering the monastery is permitted:

1. Individuals who test positive for Covid-19. TESTING REQUIREMENT: Korinji requires event attendees to test for Covid-19 within 24 hours before departing for travel to the monastery.
2. Individuals who are experiencing any symptoms of illness such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath among others.

3. Individuals who have traveled at any point in the past fourteen (14) days to a place that is experiencing sustained community spread of contagious disease.

4. Individuals who believe that they may have been exposed to contagious disease, or have been diagnosed with such, and are not yet cleared as non-contagious.

Duty to self-monitor: event attendees further agree to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of disease while at Korinji, and to notify staff there immediately if they experience any symptoms of any illness.

Donation

Korinji is a religious institution, not a for-profit business. We do not charge fees for sesshin, but suggest that you instead donate to The Korinji Foundation—a not-for-profit public charity—in the amounts below. No one will be turned away for financial reason: if you cannot make the suggested offering, please let us know.

- Dai-Sesshin Full Participation: \$425
- Dai-Sesshin Partial Participation: \$60/day
- Zen Life Retreat beginner's sesshin: \$250 (no partial participation)

Note that your space at sesshin is confirmed only after you have either submitted an offering or made some other arrangement with us. Offerings may be submitted via PayPal to info@korinji.org.

QUESTIONS? Please contact us: info@korinji.org.