



# VOLUNTEER MONTHLY

SAN FRANCISCO ZEN CENTER

***First clean, then zazen. — Suzuki Roshi***

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at SFZC's City Center and/or Green Gulch Farm. We have a variety of volunteer opportunities available and are happy to find one that aligns with your interests, talents, ability, and availability.

Your first step is to fill out the short application form [on our website](#). Once we receive your Volunteer Application, we will connect you with a staff member who will provide more information, answer any questions you may have, and help schedule your first volunteer shift.

Volunteering is a wonderful way to step more deeply into community life and discover more about yourself and your practice. SFZC treasures our volunteers, several who have been coming for years (even decades!) to help bring practice and the teachings of Suzuki Roshi to all who seek them.



## New Opportunities This Month

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### **Residential Volunteer Program at City Center**

An essential part of City Center's vision is to integrate the broader community into the ongoing life of the temple. This integration strengthens the temple, deepens individual practice, and fosters meaningful connections among all practitioners.

The **residential volunteer program** offers an opportunity to support and participate fully in the life of the temple for a short period of time.

Residential volunteers are invited to stay at City Center for **1–4 weeks** and engage directly in its daily rhythm of practice and service. Volunteers participate alongside the resident community in both spiritual practice and daily activities.

#### **Residential Volunteers Participate In:**

- **Morning zazen** (sitting meditation)
- **Service** (sutra chanting and bowing)
- **Work-Practice**, often of a physical nature
- **Evening zazen** (optional)
- **Communal vegetarian meals**
- **Dharma talks**
- **Daily Dharma discussion** with the work crew
- **Possible individual practice discussions** with a practice leader

Through shared practice, work, and study, residential volunteers experience the interconnectedness of community life while contributing to the ongoing functioning of City Center. Whether you are new to Zen or continuing an established practice, your presence and participation are valued.

#### **Work-Practice Areas**



Residential volunteers support the life of the temple by joining one of several work crews. Each crew plays an important role in caring for our shared space and community.

- **Temple Care Crew**

Helps keep the temple clean, welcoming, and ready for practice. This crew sets up rooms for arriving students and short-term visitors, maintains shared spaces, and takes on a variety of daily tasks that support community life.

- **Kitchen Crew**

Prepares nourishing vegetarian meals for the community. Working in the kitchen is a hands-on way to practice mindfulness, teamwork, and care through cooking.

- **Maintenance Crew**

Supports the upkeep and repair of temple buildings and facilities. Tasks may include simple repairs, painting, organizing tools, and other projects that keep the temple functioning smoothly. Carpentry or repair skills are helpful but not required.

- **Garden Crew**

Tends the small gardens nestled around the temple grounds. This work includes planting, watering, weeding, and general garden care—offering a quiet, grounding way to practice while supporting the beauty of the environment.

All work is done together in a spirit of cooperation and practice. No special experience is required—just a willingness to participate, learn, and contribute.

[Learn more and Apply](#)



## City Center

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### Open Sangha

Contact: [outreach@sfzc.org](mailto:outreach@sfzc.org)

Food and Meditation for Our Unhoused Neighbors

Third Monday each month

Food Preparation: 4:00–5:00 pm City Center (Conference Center at 308 Page St.)

Buddhist service and Food Distribution: 6:00-6:45 pm Civic Center (Leavenworth at Macalister)

Open Sangha is a non-denominational outdoor Buddhist service, held monthly. Everyone is welcome. After service, there is fellowship and a meal. We invite people to participate at any level of comfort. People come as they are, in whatever state they find themselves.

Attendance at worship is not required to receive a meal or private conversation. City Center Outreach hosts the meals and jointly facilitates the service with SF Night Ministry.

### Doan Ryo

Contact Michael at [ccino@sfzc.org](mailto:ccino@sfzc.org)

The Doan Ryo is a collection of people who work closely with the Ino to take care of the meditation hall and help with service. They play the timing instruments, clean the altar, assist the priests, and lead the chanting. Dates and times depend on availability. All are welcome, especially those new to practice. No experience necessary!



## **Kitchen**

**Monday–Friday, 9:30 am and/or 4:00 pm**

**Contact: [cctenzo@sfzc.org](mailto:cctenzo@sfzc.org)**

We need help in the kitchen! Join the kitchen crew for meal prep and dish washing. Volunteers are welcome to drop in or reach out by email.

## **Gardening**

**Saturday, June 6 and June 27, 11:30 am–3:30 pm**

Do you have a green thumb? Come garden at City Center and stay for lunch with the community! For more information, please reach out.

**For more information, please reach out. Contact: [ccgarden@sfzc.org](mailto:ccgarden@sfzc.org)**

## **Saturday Lunch**

**Saturdays, June 6, 13, and 27, 9:30 am or 12 pm**

**Contact: [bryan.clark@sfzc.org](mailto:bryan.clark@sfzc.org)**

Assist temple staff with lunch prep after the Saturday program.



## Green Gulch Farm

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### **Kitchen**

Wednesday–Sunday, 9:15 am–12:30 pm and 4:00–6:00 pm

Contact: [ggftenzo@sfzc.org](mailto:ggftenzo@sfzc.org)

Help out in the Green Gulch kitchen! For more info, please reach out.

### **Farm and Garden**

Contact: [farm@sfzc.org](mailto:farm@sfzc.org)

In order to allow the soil to rest and regain nutrients, the farm and garden are not taking volunteers at this time.



## Outreach Opportunities

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### **Prison Pen Pal**

Contact: [sheilaSFZC@gmail.com](mailto:sheilaSFZC@gmail.com)

Would you like to be a prison pen pal? The Prison Correspondence Team is looking for volunteers with a meditation practice who would like to be pen pals with a person who is incarcerated. All correspondence is anonymous for safety.

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For deeper and more intensive service experiences, you are welcome to apply to our residential Apprenticeship Programs such as:

- [City Center Kitchen Apprenticeship](#)
- [Green Gulch Farm Kitchen Apprenticeship](#)
- [Green Gulch Farm & Land Steward Apprenticeship](#)
- [City Center Temple Care Crew](#)

Or apply to volunteer at a [Tassajara Work Period](#), held in April and September, for specialists in carpentry, plumbing, electrical, gardening, painting, and general maintenance.

**Thank you for your interest in volunteering!**

Last update: June 2026