

Dharma Heart Zen Statement Affirming Our Bodhisattva Vows

As we navigate the suffering of our times, we recognize that it is essential to continually renew our Bodhisattva vows, remembering that all Buddhism is Engaged Buddhism and all of life is the Buddha-body. As such, our practice calls us to fiercely cultivate our ability to witness the cries of the world and respond with great care. Turning towards one another, bearing witness becomes a vehicle for deeply knowing our interdependence; responding from the heart of compassion, the illusion of separation is transformed into true solidarity.

In our sangha, we endeavor to create conditions where all beings can flourish in practice. Aware of the suffering caused by othering and polarization, we seek to strengthen the threads that weave us together, becoming a sanctuary of understanding and a refuge for all hearts and bodies. Together, we honor the wisdom of diversity and strive to actualize a path of empathy and dialogue.

With responsibility for the lineage and teachings of our Soto Zen ancestors, we come together as a community, committed to approaching each encounter with the openness and curiosity of Beginner's Mind.

We commit to fostering a community where every voice is cherished, where fear is met with understanding, and where compassion is a living expression of our vows. We invite all beings to gather under this broad canopy of protection and peace. With open hearts and minds, we stand together—vigilant and tender—as guardians of compassion, pledging to respond with grace in the face of adversity. In our collective practice, may we illuminate the Buddha-field of protective care. We realize enlightenment not as “some good feeling or particular state of mind,” but as continuous practice here in this world. Our work towards refuge and liberation is likewise not a destination, but a living expression of our Bodhisattva vows.