

June 15, 2018

Dear Sangha,

In the year 1237, Zen Master Dogen wrote *Tenzo Kyokun*, often translated into English as “Instructions for the Zen Cook.” On one level, this book contained instructions for the tenzo, or head cook on how to prepare and serve meals at the monastery and on another level, it was a recipe for how to fully live one’s life.

When Sensei first invited me to be Shuso, I was not sure that I felt ready. That feeling intensified when I found out that it was to be during Soji’s first 30-day, Summer Ango period, which was right around the corner! Although I do not feel ready for this task, I trust in Sensei’s decision and I will work to the best of my ability to intensify my practice along with the rest of you during this period of peaceful dwelling (Ango).

The theme for this summer’s Ango is “The Supreme Meal,” and the study text is *Instructions to the Cook*, by Bernie Tetsugen Roshi. This supreme meal must be made by preparing whatever ingredients are found on hand, even if they are only rice and water. Of course, in another sense, this supreme meal is our life, as we live in the way of Zen practice. As we go about our lives each day, consider every ingredient, from your waking state in the morning to your daily commute, your circumstances at work or at home, and all of the people you come into contact with. How often do we strive to prepare the supreme meal out of whatever ingredients are on hand each day?

The Ango period for this summer will start July 15<sup>th</sup> and end on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Please join me during this intensive period of practice where we will look at the supreme meal of our lives. As we go about each day during this period, let us consider not only what ingredients we have received, but also how we can best make our offering with them.

With gratitude,

*Christopher Hakurei Kulp*