

Segaki Ceremony

All participants stand, facing into the Meditation Hall.

Beginning 3 bells

Precentor: Invocation

“To the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas gone before,
To the sacred Dharma, flawless and supremely rare,
And to all the Buddhas’ offspring,
We make these offerings of candles, incense, flowers, fruit, rice and cakes
That we might gain this precious attitude of Bodhicitta.
And, with kind generosity, seek to drive away the endless fear and pain of
ourselves and all beings.
Let us vow, with irreversible intent, to embrace this heart of Bodhicitta,
Willing to set free ourselves and the endless multitudes of beings.”

All: following the Precentor, all process slowly around the meditation hall,
stopping as each person takes time at the altar to confess and acknowledge
his/her neurotic crimes.

Each at the altar:

Steps to the center of the altar.

Confession first, read silently: “All harmful actions, behaviors and
karma perpetuated by me has been and is caused by beginningless greed,
anger, and delusion. I now make full and wholehearted resolve to release
these.”

Recognition and acknowledgement of neurotic crimes: Reads silently
the 1st & 2nd steps in the Laying Down process that they have written on
paper, Recognition and Reliance. Then offers incense and recites the Three
Homages.

All: Proceed outside, led by Precentor.

All create a circle around the burning bowl.

All recite together the Buddha bead: “I am born of karma, I am heir to karma, I abide in karma, and I am supported by karma. Whatever I do creates karma, and I shall surely experience this karma. The merit for all good acts I do freely offer to all beings. Dutiyampi, tatiyampi, savaha. Again and yet again, may it be so.”

All recite Cleansing/Releasing Karma Verse*, over and over. First the Precentor steps up to the burning bowl and releases steps 3 and 4 of his/her neurotic crimes into the bowl. Then s/he offers incense into the burning bowl. Then each participant steps up to the burning bowl and releases steps 3 and 4 of his/her neurotic crimes into the bowl. Then s/he offers incense into the burning bowl. The rest of the community is reciting the Cleansing/Releasing Karma Verse over and over, until all are through releasing.

*Cleansing/Releasing Karma Verse:

“In this and all my other lifetimes,
Wandering in the round without beginning,
Blindly I have brought forth immorality,
Inciting others to commit the same.

I have taken pleasure in such harm,
Tricked and overmastered by my ignorance.
Now I see the blame of it, and in my heart,
O great protectors, I declare it!

Whatever I have done against the Triple Gem,
Against my parents, teachers, and the rest,
Through force of my conditioning,
By the faculties of body, speech and mind;

All the harm I - unskilled - have committed,
The layers that cling to me through many harmful deeds;
All the frightening things that I have caused to be,
I openly declare to you, teachers of the world.”

When all are through releasing, all recite once: “Here, in humble submission, in order to experience this most perfect now, I deeply bow* and sacrifice all thoughts, all tensions, all pressures and desires.”

All: Proceed back into the Meditation Hall, led by Precentor.

Guide: Offertory

“With joy we celebrate the virtues of kindness and compassion
That relieve all beings from the sorrows of the states of loss.
Now we gassho and ask the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who reside in every
quarter
To kindle the Dharma’s light for those who remain bewildered in the dark of
pain.”

Precentor: Offering of Merit

All: Three Homages

Homage to all the Buddhas in all Worlds;
Homage to all the Bodhisattvas in all Worlds;
Homage to the Prana Paramita Hridaya Sutra.

Formal prostrations with the Precentor and the Bell Ringer to end the ceremony and leave the hall.

Ending 2 bells