



GREAT HEARTLAND
BUDDHIST TEMPLE
of TOLEDO

Third Annual Sangha Survey 2016 Summary

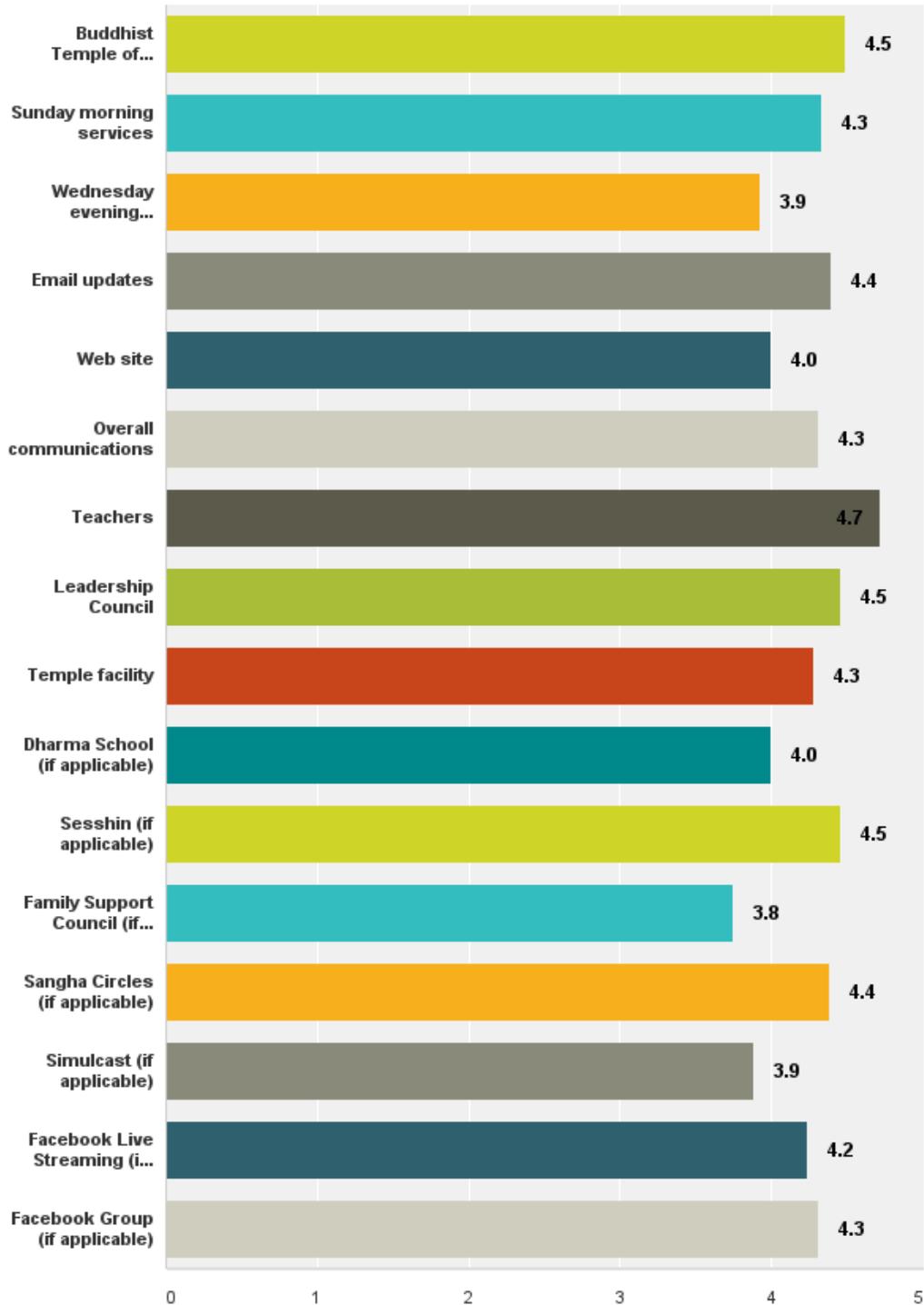
Leadership Council conducted this survey to better understand the needs of the Sangha, and it is conducted annually to track our progress. The survey was first conducted in 2014. We greatly appreciate the 37 Sangha Members who participated this year. This summary of survey responses is for our Members to see an overview of the feedback we received so that we all have an understanding of our goals for the coming year.

Sincerely,
Leadership Council 2015-16

Mike Chuso Zickar, Chair
Cheryl KinKo Baughman
Wesley Shinyu Bullock
Jenna Zusei Hirshman
Michael Hoshi Leizerman
Rachel Jun'nyo Zickar

Q1 Please rate your level of overall satisfaction on each of the following areas:

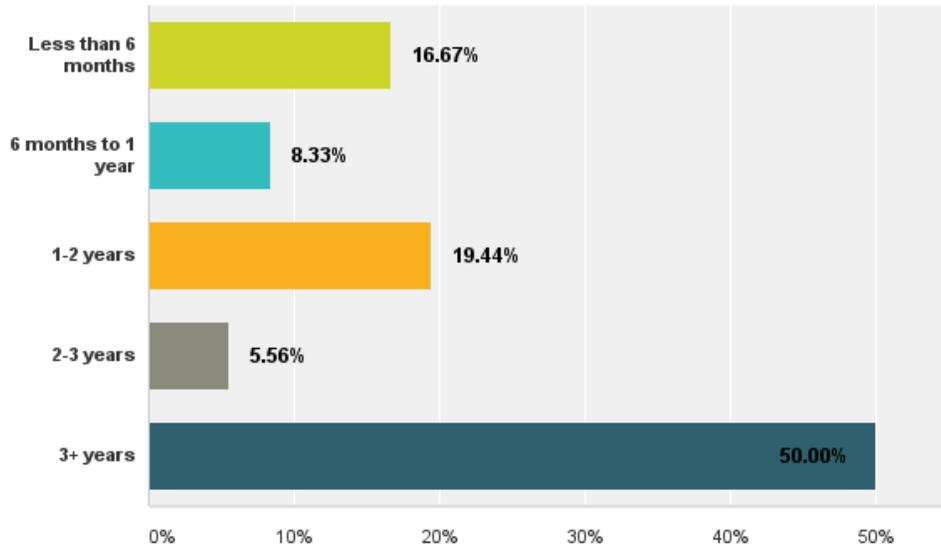
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----|------|
| Buddhist Temple of Toledo | 5.41% 2 | 0.00% 0 | 5.41% 2 | 18.92% 7 | 70.27% 26 | 37 | 4.49 |
| Sunday morning services | 3.03% 1 | 3.03% 1 | 9.09% 3 | 27.27% 9 | 57.58% 19 | 33 | 4.33 |
| Wednesday evening services | 3.33% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 30.00% 9 | 33.33% 10 | 33.33% 10 | 30 | 3.93 |
| Email updates | 2.78% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 2.78% 1 | 44.44% 16 | 50.00% 18 | 36 | 4.39 |
| Web site | 2.86% 1 | 11.43% 4 | 2.86% 1 | 48.57% 17 | 34.29% 12 | 35 | 4.00 |
| Overall communications | 2.86% 1 | 2.86% 1 | 5.71% 2 | 37.14% 13 | 51.43% 18 | 35 | 4.31 |
| Teachers | 2.78% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 16.67% 6 | 80.56% 29 | 36 | 4.72 |
| Leadership Council | 2.86% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 8.57% 3 | 25.71% 9 | 62.86% 22 | 35 | 4.46 |
| Temple facility | 2.78% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 8.33% 3 | 44.44% 16 | 44.44% 16 | 36 | 4.28 |
| Dharma School (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 6.67% 1 | 26.67% 4 | 26.67% 4 | 40.00% 6 | 15 | 4.00 |
| Sesshin (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 4.17% 1 | 45.83% 11 | 50.00% 12 | 24 | 4.46 |
| Family Support Council (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 41.67% 5 | 41.67% 5 | 16.67% 2 | 12 | 3.75 |
| Sangha Circles (if applicable) | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 | 9.52% 2 | 42.86% 9 | 47.62% 10 | 21 | 4.38 |
| Simulcast (if applicable) | 8.00% 2 | 4.00% 1 | 16.00% 4 | 36.00% 9 | 36.00% 9 | 25 | 3.88 |
| Facebook Live Streaming (if applicable) | 3.45% 1 | 6.90% 2 | 3.45% 1 | 34.48% 10 | 51.72% 15 | 29 | 4.24 |
| Facebook Group (if applicable) | 3.45% 1 | 3.45% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 44.83% 13 | 48.28% 14 | 29 | 4.31 |

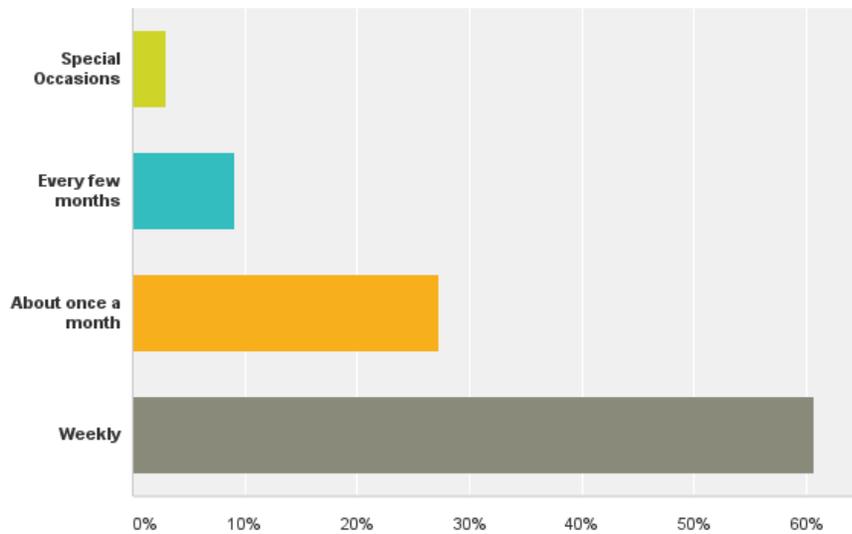
Q2 How long have you been visiting the Temple?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 1



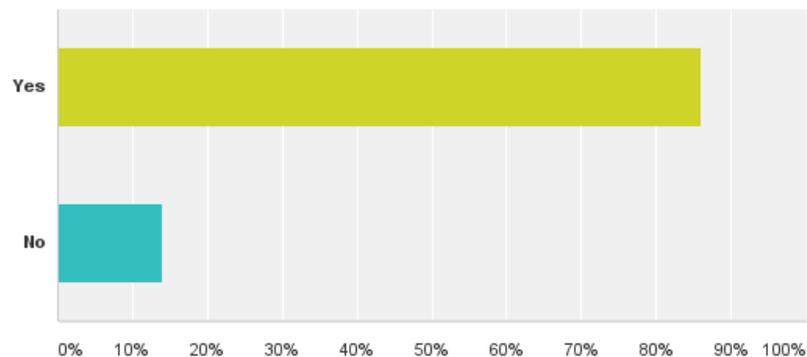
Q3 How frequently do you visit the Temple?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 4



Q4 Are you currently a Member of the Temple (agreed to Sangha Covenant and donated)?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 1



Q5 Do work and childcare situations make it difficult for you to register for events sometimes? Do you have any comments about how we could make this process easier?

- No
- Yes, they do, but I'm not sure how to remedy this because I think it's societal. Employers expect for us to work more than 40 hours a week - plus having time to connect as a family with young children, plus spiritual life and all of the other hobbies or interests or volunteer work we're doing - all make it difficult to register for events at the Temple. I would say that work is the most difficult thing to schedule around, and that goes for events at the Temple and everything else in our lives. If we start to offer childcare, we need to be absolutely certain that the best interests of the children are kept at the forefront. I'm not satisfied with the notion that we'll just bring our kids to be watched by a rotating group of caregivers who may or may not have any type of education or childcare certifications. I have concerns for the children, but also for the legal standing of the Temple should anything nefarious occur.
- Both
- Having a sesshin in every month provides more options
- Yes
- no
- Yes
- Yes. Weekend sesshins would be helpful.
- Full time work makes it a challenge to do week-long Sesshins
- My work schedule is very demanding. It makes it difficult to attend, but it is my problem, not the temples.
- Yes. But always sports events.
- Yes very difficult - not sure how to resolve it

- Sign ups/ registrations are sometimes not compatible with phone devices. That is frustrating.
- Yes, but not sure how that could change. Registration process itself seems to be working pretty well.

Q6 If you have taken Jukai, please share any comments you may have about that process.

- I believe that the process at the farm is accessible, and lovely. I do however, feel that certain people who take it, and this is only in the last few years, may not be ready. They have only been attending the temple for a few months, and they either think that they need/have to, or don't have a full understanding yet of what it means.
- See above - time constraints in our lives just make it difficult to complete the readings in a thoughtful, considered manner (rather than cramming). Full day and weekend retreats are necessary, but difficult to be away from family for that long. This is the ongoing struggle of applying what we know is best for practitioners vs. the pull of family life and other obligations out in the non-monk-ly world.
- So far, so good. ;-)
- beautiful and important
- Overall, has been a good process. Perhaps a refresher on proper zazen setup and technique for home would be appreciated in the 1st formation class.
- extremely valuable turning point in my life?
- It's a fun, family-building process that is also challenging, but well worth it.
- Would be nice to include more of the community throughout the process. Need to work harder to keep folks coming back after they finish Jukai--there is a big dropoff there that could be explored.
- I love Jukai renewals! Maybe we can try to do one a quarter since one a month peters out? With Google hangouts options?
- I am currently a Jukai initiate and so far it has been a great process. The teaching retreat was especially helpful.
- It is a beautiful process! But extra challenging with the heat and bugs.
- Jukai is done well. The hard part is how to keep people engaged after Jukai...and engaged at a level that keeps them feeling spiritually nourished and supported, so that they are willing to support the Temple.

Q7 If you have taken Shoken, please share any comments you may have about that process.

- great process, still developing. Annual group meeting is a good idea (like the working lunch)
- an even more valuable turning point?
- It was fun making the robes, but I would have liked to have a little more time to sit and receive more teaching about what being a Shoken student means.
- Finish the robes earlier! Would be nice to do some strategic planning in to keep all members engaged and not just GC members.

- Let's try hard not to sew robes at the rohatsu sesshin going forward; there was no way to avoid it last year. I missed the opportunity to do tangaryo, is there a way we can do that for folks who were sewing in 2015, even though it's normally done before taking Shoken? I love the idea of new Shoken initiates meeting together with the existing Shoken students during formation; for Shoken it is joining an active group whereas for Jukai the class forms to undertake the precepts and then disbands. It's great!
- More zazen in the process please.

Q8 Please share any comments you may have about Ango.

- Absolutely helps me strengthen my practice, but I also feel guilty if I'm not able to read the text that is assigned and/or attend the Ango teachings.
- Often feel it is just a bit too long. Burn out
- I gain great benefit from the annual rhythm of Ango. But does Ango really need to have a "theme" beyond the simple intensification of practice? I have, however, greatly enjoyed shared learning from the Ango readings in the past, particularly things like Dogen's Eight Awakenings, Hakuin's Wild Ivy, and Dogen's Genjokoan.
- I've enjoyed ango, but the lessons sometimes seem too familiar.
- Home study is very useful.
- It's early but I look forward to each season.
- Let's prepare more in advance so we can announce a couple of weeks before Ango what the events and texts are going to be and distribute photocopies if its a short text.
- I really have enjoyed the 2 Angos I have attended. Very informative and a boost to my practice.
- I would prefer a concentrated week of text study like last week instead of sunday mornings.
- What is it? :)

Q9 Please share any comments you may have about Sesshin, particularly the new funding model.

- I like the new model. There are plenty of Sangha members who can attend, who may have not been able to in the past because of financial issues.
- Sesshin is transformational and should be a part of our sangha's offerings. People who have never been have expressed feeling like it's too foreign or difficult for them to participate in. Demystifying it for newbies could be helpful.
- Love it. The increased rigor of the schedule and the accessibility through the funding model is great
- Sesshin seems to be an important part of practice to many people, and I have heard Rinsen Sensei mention on more than one occasion that if we had to eliminate everything except for one thing, that it would be sesshin he would want to save. I have no idea about the funding model - I will let the accountants argue about that. I have a feeling it would be better financially for the Temple if we went back to the older model where people paid for their attendance at sesshin, especially because there has been good

attendance since the model went into effect. However, maybe the higher attendance is due to the new model? It would be hard to know for sure!

- This is the best thing we've ever done. Sesshin is alive again!!
- The earlier rising is not possible for me. Funding model is fine.
- Okay, I know the pugs are a part of the personality of the farm, but they really are a distraction during intense periods of meditation. I think that Rinsen and Doan may consider whether pugs on the loose constitute an ideal meditational environment, or were ever a factor within their own respective trainings.
- I like the emphasis on retreats. I like the transparency of the costs and how the temple is clearly telling everyone how much it costs.
- I loved the teaching sessions at the temple this week and look forward to next year
- Love sesshin and would participate more except for my asthma triggered by animal dander.
- I love it, it's the best. So many people are coming to so much sesshin the vibe is totally different.
- Really like the new funding model - not having to budget separately for membership and sesshin
- Makes sense to fold it into membership generally. I'm glad that the cost of Sesshin is less of a barrier for those who are members but can't afford it. Will have to see how the finances plays out.

Q10 Please share any comments you may have about Leadership Council.

- Doing an awesome job and thank you for being generous with your time
- I am grateful that there are such thoughtful and dedicated people willing to take on the hard work of running a successful organization. More importantly, I get the feeling that the LC is able to take a large load off of the shoulders of the teachers in order to free them up to do the more important spiritual things. That being said, however, I wonder sometimes if the LC should be more invisible, and simply act more like a board of trustees and 'yes-man' for the Abbot. And the only reason I suggest that is because the LC is made up of mere mortals and the teachers have super powers that shouldn't be overruled by a board of bureaucrats that seem overly concerned with membership numbers and bottom line issues (as well they should be!).
- There seems to be a lot of focus on budget and expectations that the members will cover the cost. This is obviously not going to happen. Where are the 5 and 10 year plans? What is the vision for the future?
- The Leadership Council has been very helpful in answering questions.
- Great job!
- The council seems to be doing a good job. I appreciate the e-mail updates with the council minutes.
- Good job moving things forward
- I think they're doing a spectacular job and I know it's a load of work for all.
- More transparency about the budget, budgeting errors, and monthly financial summaries to the community.

- They do a very good job of keeping Sangha members informed of everything going on at the Temple.
- You are doing an amazing job!!!

Q11 What are the top three things you value about the Temple, beyond Buddha, Dharma and Sangha?

- Peaceful, Friendship, Solidarity
- The confidentiality of the teachers, the new accessibility of Sesshin, and the openness of the community.
- 1) Teachings and the teachers 2) Community that is built among practitioners 3) Personal practice and transformation that I'm seeing in my life as a result of that practice
- All are equally welcome
- Openness Energy Facility
- Sesshin, Dokusan, Dharma talks
- Provides a place to practice zazen in a group setting, which intensifies personal practice. . the teachers and passion for their practice. education provided by the temple
- Supportive environment Teaching Styles Children welcome
- Carved out time for meditation, reflection, community
- provides opportunity to practice real authentic zen teachers are flexible and open to change and growth as needed opportunities keep opening up for deepening practice through teachings, sesshin, etc.
- social events, location, well kept facilities
- Teachers/Lineage Services/sesshin/events
- 1. strong community 2. welcoming to questions, families and new faces 3. members are respectful to other peoples path
- Teachers, sitting
- Welcoming , like minded people. Spiritual home.
- Support, education, structure
- Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha encapsulate everything.
- 1) Sitting with the group 2) retreats 3)
- Very welcoming! I felt very comfortable with the whole thing! :)
- Various ages involved. Sincere bodhisattvas. Excellent teachers and leaders
- 1) Rinsen and Do'on 2. The social activities 3. The opportunity for continued spiritual development
- 1 - The opportunity to spend so much time learning about life and the dharma by practicing directly with the teachers, not just at sesshin once a month or a few times a year, but really many hours each week. I have changed as a person and seen others change to become more open, accepting, loving, and compassionate with this constant immersive training. 2 - Our community is open and welcoming to everyone who walks in the door, and makes efforts to invite and welcome more and more diverse friends all the time. 3 - The financial and social model of sangha members coming together to support each others' practice by pooling resources and sharing the results.

- I value the hard work that the teachers put in making Buddhism accessible and easy to understand.
- Buddha, Dharma and Sangha
- Opportunity for deep authentic study and practice, practical for modern lay life, accessible to all monetarily and geographically
- The strong efforts to involve children/teens, the various opportunities to learn and grow in my Buddhist practice, and the peaceful and accepting/supportive atmosphere
- The social / fun / education activities at the Temple that are more relaxed and for entertainment or more general community building, such as yoga classes, music, visiting Tibetan Monks. This is how people who aren't Buddhists...or any religion, can enjoy, learn about, and get connected to the Temple as a vital part of the community.

Q12 What are three things we could improve upon?

- Air regulation
- 1) Being organized prior to liturgy service so that positions are assigned before 10:55 (preferably the week before, or having a rotating schedule throughout the year) 2) Being financially stable 3) Continuing to work on being a welcoming space for newcomers without the appearance of cliques
- Meditation, services, people's interest .
- Sesshin in each month. Financial stability. Sesshin infrastructure
- There seems to be a flow of how one gets involved in the temple. The pattern I have seen, in general, is a person comes to sessions on Wednesday or Sunday then might feel inclined to become a member, followed by going on to Jukai and getting involved further in the temple. Perhaps having a brief description on this flow stated on the website might help clarify to someone starting out how to get involved. I know personally I confused membership with jukai and I was not ready to start jukai, thus with my confusion I did not become a member for almost a year. Perhaps clarifying some of the activities and terms we use on the website would help prevent this confusion.
- Community Awareness, Involvement and Presence
- It's not that I don't want to see growth, but sometimes I wonder if we are being too pushy in trying to get new members. Shouldn't people kind of naturally fall into practice from the mysterious workings of karma rather than being proselytized. Although I realize it's probably important to build membership, maybe just by setting a good example and just showing up will grow the Temple in the way it needs to grow. Maybe there should be membership categories - like suggested amounts for: 1-people who just want to support what we are doing; 2-people who actively receive benefit from the Temple; 3-people who regularly attend services and sesshin; 4-Jukai students; 5-shoken students; 6-benefactors and bodhissatavas. Maybe there could be suggested levels of annual donations based on where one falls within these categories? I would like to see Sundays turn into something more like Wednesday nights, with teisho and dokusan. I sometimes feel uncomfortable about the Dharma School as well - maybe for the same reason as above, that it is forcing religion and imposing a set of beliefs onto these little people who are not necessarily coming to the Temple for the same reason the adults are. I hate to see religion jammed down people's throats - especially innocent children! In a way I feel that the

Dharma School and the tone of the Sunday service is too church like and is "dumbing down" the seriousness of zen practice in order to accommodate the busy lives of parents and lay practitioners who may even be lacking the commitment shared by other more serious students of the buddhadharma. Although it is admirable that we are providing a large range of services and offerings to meet people's needs, if there has to be some kind of prioritization, I would hope it would be geared more toward the committed and serious students and less toward the casual participants - although maybe these are the people who need it the most! Maybe just offering childcare would be preferable to "sunday school" if the goal is to support the practice of those who would not be able to participate otherwise.

- More community outreach, attempts to find program funding via grants...
- Vision for future Communication about always being behind on rent (let's downsize if we can't afford the place). Emails are too long to read. Facebook is not the best platform for everything. Website is not user friendly. Event calendar is not always accurate.
- Dharma school can be a little disorganized at times, especially if there is a substitute. It may be helpful to have a lesson plan book with different activities so it's easier to pick up if a teacher is out
- It would be nice if there were more members at the Wednesday evening service. Starting and stopping on time would be helpful so we don't get home so late.
- More opportunities for special events or holidays like Buddha's birthday or temple anniversary. We don't have any annual events other than ango open and close every six months. Special events may give temple more visibility and attract new members. A newsletter would help. Maybe this could even include life events from temple members with permission.
- Scheduling, communication, creating a deeper bench of leaders (not just LC members)
- Let's move sesshin meditation back into the garage space and the dogs into the house space.
- 1) Try doing less and being less for everyone so that we get a very dedicated group of people 2) keep the children under control during Sunday service
- We haven't been coming that long I love the whole environment!
- ?
- Kitchen area always seems dirty A schedule for cleaning the temple that would involve several members so perhaps we could each volunteer to clean one morning a month in teams, so it didn't have to fall on the same people.
- 1 - Saturday services 2 - Air conditioning 3 - Study of core Buddhist texts (like the core Sutras) and more advanced texts for students who've been around awhile
- Do not see anything really that needs addressed at this time
- Keep to schedule on Weds nights so end on time :)
- Financial stability. Great efforts have been made, but it is an ongoing process.

Q13 What are services/other offerings we currently don't offer that you would like to see?

- I'm still newish and I'm very pleased with all you have to offer.

- Meditation, food
- I feel like we are on the edge of over reaching. I don't recommend adding anything at this time
- Having more sessions throughout the week for just zazen as a group at the temple without liturgy or dharma talks. I know the environment of the temple always intensifies sitting sessions for me and perhaps for others as well.
- I miss the Saturday Zazen. I wonder if there should be sesshins or multi day residential workshops that are centered around a particular theme.
- Teen LGBT support group promoted to the larger Toledo community.
- More sitting times Sitting times/groups/spaces elsewhere in the city
- I would like to see some special council (like a lay ministry) for emergency support. This would take burden off of Rinsen and Doon if they wished. For example if some member was in hospital someone from the lay ministry could visit.
- Offer less.
- Teaching retreats like we just held. Perhaps they needn't be a week long...
- 1 - Advanced reading group 2 - Reinstate Zazen at the temple; it's a great way for people with pollen and dust allergies to engage deeply with the practice (whether they are Shoken students or not, whether it counts as a training day or not), just have a few of these each year.
- More teaching on basic Buddhist philosophy/worldview.
- More dokusan/ more sangha circles/

Q14 What is your vision for the future of the Sangha? What do you hope it looks like in 5-10 years?

- Large and thriving
- Financial stability and even growth. Better retention rates. Taking steps to move into a physical space that is more conducive for growth, welcoming community members who just want to try it out, and our needs as a sangha.
- Wild , scientific century
- I'm hopeful that there are more sitting groups and teachers in other parts of Ohio affiliated with the Temple and Sangha.
- more developed sesshin facility. A little bit bigger in membership. 2-4 week residential opportunities.
- I am hoping as a group we can provide more services for the community of Toledo. I am currently exploring food security within children of Lucas and surrounding counties. I would love to work with local food shelter organizations in the area and have the Sangha prepare meals for families in the area near the temple. Also perhaps have the Sangha construct a permanent sesshin housing somewhere that would allow members to use the facility for sesshin throughout the year at their convenience.
- Connected, Diverse, Thriving
- I wonder if there is an ideal size for the Sangha? Are there disadvantages of trying to be all things for all people? Or does the mission be more focused? I have no idea. Also, what if the Rinsen and Do'on decide to move to Nebraska or somewhere? Does the Sangha evaporate? Is there a succession plan? But really I hope the Sangha does not change a

whole lot from what it is now. Maybe better retreat facilities, maybe even a residential/monastic component, and maybe more thematic classes, workshops and training programs. But at the core I hope we remain strongly Zen Buddhist students and practitioners.

- Financially stable, Having grown and growing.
- Financially sustainable. Succession plans possible/established. Center & Retreat Space acquired and financed (or on their way through bank loans) OR fixed rent at a sustainable rate
- I hope that the community grows, more families get involved and that those with children feel comfortable bringing them to events.
- I hope to see a vibrant community with such a large membership that the temple space is too small. I'd also like to see a balanced budget.
- Not spending beyond our means, but in a facility that makes sense for our size and needs. Have savings for ebb and flow of dues--a buffer.
- Stable and committed. We still have people transitioning in and out. Sometimes a third of attendees on a Sunday morning are newcomers who we never see again. This is not a problem per se, but we need a stable base. I worry also when a significant percentage of our base are college and fresh out of college, as we know a fair number of them won't be with us for long.
- The temple going in less directions and being very focused on retreats.
- I would like for us to eventually become members and be more active.
- the same but with smaller groups in local communities also
- I think and hope it will grow. I think it's a national jewel that will one day draw members from all parts of the country (North America).
- 1 - steady 200 - 225 households (7 years?) 2 - likely or certain successors identified, ordained (5 years years) 3 - better retreat space and dormitory space built (10 years) 4 - monthly zazenkai at the temple 5 - critical mass of Jukai members to hold monthly renewals 6 - group full moon renewal ceremonies 7 - more robust dharma camp that attracts people outside the community and runs for a couple of weeks once or twice per summer 8 - a buddhist charter school for primary school?
- I would like to see the Sangha continue to grow. It looks like we are getting quite a few young folks coming to services and that is great because they are the future of our community. I also hope that with growth, we do not lose the tight-knittedness that is so important!
- Economically sustainable. Depth of practice.
- My vision is the teachers' vision
- A lot more wonderful people!!!!
- Bathrooms and showers at retreat center!

Q15 Do you have any other comments or concerns that you would like to share?

- Facebook live streaming is hard to hear
- Awareness
- Great group of people
- Thank you

- Leadership council is doing a wonderful job.
- Thanks for all you do!
- What qualifications do the members of Leadership Council have? How are they chosen? Wouldn't it be best to bring in an advisor who has brought other religious institutions to financial stability? An expert who could guide us?
- Thank you for your teachings. You will never know how grateful we are for this community _^_
- I'm so grateful for the Reverends, the Temple space and the Sangha! _^_
- See the above thoughts regarding sesshin. I think the priests could step up and demonstrate a little more respect for / commitment to creating the conditions necessary for deep practice.
- Thank you for all that everyone is doing to support the temple.
- Thank you for seeking our input
- Gratitude
- I would love to see more of the teaching retreats like the recent one, maybe tie them in with Ango. Just a thought.
- Blessings, bows, thanks
- _^_ bows to all of every person's practice and effort