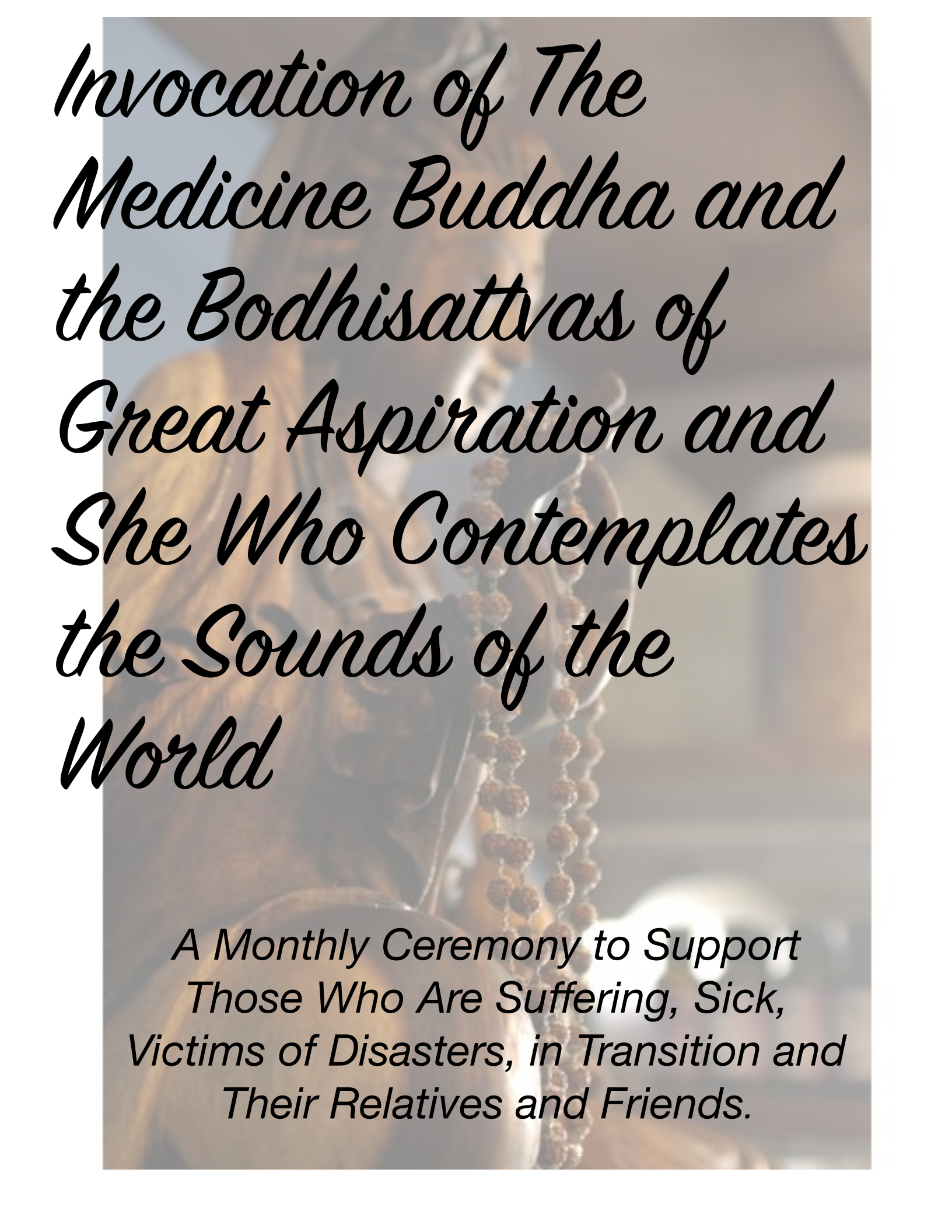




Invocation of The Medicine Buddha and the Bodhisattvas of Great Aspiration and She Who Contemplates the Sounds of the World

*A Monthly Ceremony to Support
Those Who Are Suffering, Sick,
Victims of Disasters, in Transition and
Their Relatives and Friends.*

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V2019-3

INSTRUMENT KEY:



Large Bell



Singing Bowl



Stopping Bell/Bowl



Strike Handle on Bowl



Inkin Bell



Chukpi/Clappers



Strike Mallet on Wood



Moktak/Mokugyo



Drum



Hand Bell

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FIVE MOUNTAIN ZEN ORDER



Ceremony to Support those Who Are Suffering or in Transition

This ceremony is to offer peace of mind and courage to those who suffer, the sick and to those who have been victims of disasters, are in transition as well as for their relatives and friends.



1. Incense Offering & Lighting Candles

[LIGHT ALTAR CANDLES - RIGHT TO LEFT][IF SMALL LIGHTING CANDLE IS NEEDED LIGHT IT LAST]

[LIGHT ONE STICK OF INCENSE ON MAIN ALTAR]

[UNCOVER WATER & RICE OFFERING BOWLS—RIGHT TO LEFT]

2. Three Bows

[ FOR EACH BOW] 3x

3. Homage to the Buddha Shakyamuni

[ALL TOGETHER]

[Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa] 2x

Honor to the Blessed One, the Noble One, the fully Awakened One

4. The Three Refuges

[ALL TOGETHER]

I take refuge in the Buddha,
the one who shows me the way in this life.

I take refuge in the Dharma,
the way of understanding and of love.

I take refuge in the Sangha,
the community that lives in harmony and awareness.



Dwelling in the refuge of Buddha,
I clearly see the path of light and beauty in the world.

Dwelling in the refuge of Dharma,
I learn to open many doors on the path of transformation.

Dwelling in the refuge of Sangha,
shining light that supports me, keeping my practice free of obstruction.



Taking refuge in the Buddha in myself,
I aspire to help all people recognize their own awakened nature,
realizing the Mind of Love.

Taking refuge in the Dharma in myself,
I aspire to help all people fully master the ways of practice
and walk together on the path of liberation.

Taking refuge in the Sangha in myself,
I aspire to help all people build Fourfold Communities, 
to embrace all beings and support their transformation 

5. The Invocation of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas Ceremony Opening

[OFFICIANT 1]

Please listen! The peace and joy of the entire world, including the worlds of the living and dead, depend on our own peace and joy in this moment. With all our heart and one-pointed mind let us offer our merit and blessings to those in need.

Today the community has gathered to recite scripture, chant, practice mindfulness of the Buddha, give spiritual support and offer peace to our loved ones as well as their relatives and friends who are in need of spiritual support.

6. The Medicine Buddha Ceremony Opening

[OFFICIANT 2]

This Medicine Buddha Ceremony is for those who are seeking relief from afflictions of the body and mind. Chanting together with mindfulness and respect, with single-minded concentration and whole-hearted sincerity we can help those who are suffering from many physical ailments, those who are poor and deprived of daily necessities, those who often encounter disasters, accidents, or situations of distress and danger.

Chanting the Medicine Buddha Sutra will help bring recovery from ailments, abundance and blessings to the participants and to the beings to whom the ceremony is dedicated.

Additionally, for those who have broken the precepts, reciting this sutra can clear the negativity and obstacles resulting from their transgressions.



7. Scripture Recitation

from “***The Sutra of the Medicine Buddha Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata: His Past Vows, Merits and Virtues***”

[ALL TOGETHER OR READ EACH VERSE ALOUD INDIVIDUALLY]

Opening Verse:

[OFFICIANT 1]

The unexcelled, most profound, and exquisitely wondrous Dharma, is difficult to encounter throughout hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas. Since we are now able to see, hear, receive and retain it, may we comprehend the true meaning of the Tathāgata.

Discourse:

[ALL TOGETHER OR READ EACH VERSE ALOUD ONE BY ONE]

The Buddha then said to the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī: “East of this world, past countless Buddha-lands—more numerous than the grains of sand in ten Ganges Rivers—there exists a world called Pure Lapis Lazuli. The Buddha of that world is called Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Medicine Buddha Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata.

“Mañjuśrī, when the World-Honored Medicine Buddha was treading the Bodhisattva path, he solemnly made Twelve Great Vows so that in a future life, when he has realized Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi, all sentient beings, if their minds be perfectly collected and pure, should they pay homage to, bow to or chant his name, they may fulfill their greatest aspirations.”

“The First Great Vow: I vow that my body shall shine as beams of brilliant light on this infinite and boundless world, showering on all beings, ridding them of their ignorance and worries through my teachings. May all sentient beings be brilliant and adorned in mind and body like me, and finally awaken like the Buddha.”

“The Second Great Vow: I vow that my body be like lapis lazuli, pure and flawless, radiating rays of splendid light to every corner, brightening up and awakening all beings with wisdom. With the blessings of compassion, may all beings strengthen their spiritual power and physical energy, so that they could realize their greatest aspirations and remain on the path”.

“The Third Great Vow: I vow that I shall grant by means of boundless wisdom, all beings with the inexhaustible things that they require, and relieve them from all pains and guilt resulting from materialistic desires. Clothing, food, accommodation and transport are essentials and they should be utilized wisely, therefore, anything remaining should be

generously shared with the community so that all may live together in harmony.”

“The Fourth Great Vow: I vow that I will set all those who have gone astray back upon the path to awakening.”

“The Fifth Great Vow: I vow that I will help all sentient beings to observe the precepts for spiritual development and moral conduct. Even those who may disparage or violate the precepts, will be guided toward true repentance. Should they sincerely regret their transgressions and strive to make corrections, they will receive the rays of forgiveness and recover their lost morality and purity.”

“The Sixth Great Vow: I vow that all sentient beings who are physically disabled or suffering from illnesses of all sorts will be blessed with good health, both physically and mentally.”

“The Seventh Great Vow: I vow to relieve all pain and poverty of the those who are tormented by illness, who are homeless or impoverished, who are alone or suffering in anyway. Through the power of my merits and virtues, may the sick be cured, the helpless be helped, and the poor be assisted.”

“The Eighth Great Vow: I vow to help all sentient beings who suffer both inwardly and outwardly, because of their gender or gender identity to find strength and peace.”

“The Ninth Great Vow: I vow to help all sentient beings escape from the net of unwholesome thoughts, and should they be caught in the thicket of unskillful views, I will guide them to the path, gradually inducing them to cultivate the Buddha way.”

“The Tenth Great Vow: I vow that all sentient beings who are shackled, beaten, imprisoned, enslaved, or condemned to death and who have genuinely and sincerely repented will be blessed and saved from all these afflictions, through the power of my merits and virtues.”

“The Eleventh Great Vow: I vow that if sentient beings who are tormented by hunger and thirst, perform unwholesome actions or commit a crime in their attempts to survive, will be lead to the benefits of the dharma and the most favorable food and drink and eventually to a peaceful life.”

“The Twelfth Great Vow: I vow that all sentient beings who are utterly destitute, lacking clothes to protect them from insects, heat and cold—and are suffering day and night—will find their way to the benefits of the dharma and the path that leads to their relief.”

“Mañjuśrī, these are the twelve sublime vows made by Bhaiṣajyaguru, the World-Honored Medicine Buddha Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata, Arhat, the Perfectly Awakened, when he was cultivating the Bodhisattva path”

8. Praising the Medicine Buddha

[ALL TOGETHER]

We bow to Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Medicine Buddha.  [SITTING BOW]

Each and every offering, including those actually performed and those mentally transformed, we pay homage to you.

We confess all non-virtuous actions accumulated since beginningless time. We rejoice in the virtues of both ordinary and noble beings.

As our guide we request you, Medicine Buddha, to please abide well and turn the wheel of Dharma until samsara ends.

All virtues, both our own and those of others, we dedicate to the ripening of bodhicitta and the attainment of buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings



9. Chanting: the Medicine Buddha Dharani

[ONCE CHANTING BEGINS, EACH PERSON COMES FORWARD, BOWS BEFORE THE ALTAR, TAKES A CUP OF TEA, BOWS AND RETURNS TO HIS OR HER SEAT.]

Namo bhagavate bhaiṣajyaguru vaiḍūrya prabharājāya tathāgatāya
arahate samyak sambuddhāya tadyathā: oṃ bhaiṣajye bhaiṣajye
bhaiṣajya-samudgate svāhā.  ..*[REPEAT]*

Do away with illness. Do away with illness. Do away with the great illness of the ignorance of our True Nature

[ONCE CHANT IS FINISHED THE SANGHA DRINKS THE TEA TOGETHER]

10. Prayer to The Medicine Buddha

[ALL TOGETHER]

We beseech you, Bhaiṣajyaguru, The Medicine Buddha, whose sky-colored holy body of lapis lazuli signifies omniscient wisdom and compassion as vast as limitless space, please grant us your blessings.

We beseech you, Radiant Healing Medicine Buddha, who holds in the right hand, the king of medicines symbolizing the vow to help all sentient beings who are suffering from illness, please grant us your blessings.

We beseech you, Compassionate Medicine Buddha, who holds in the left hand, a bowl of nectar symbolizing the vow to give the glorious undying nectar of the Dharma that leads to the elimination of sickness, old age, and death, please grant us your blessings.



11. Sitting Meditation

12. The Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva Ceremony

Opening

[OFFICANT 2]

Once one person is able to give rise to a deep sense of peace and joy, the whole world benefits. We have gathered today to light the lamp of peace and joy in our hearts by chanting, practicing sitting meditation, reciting sacred verses and being mindful in order to be in communion with the essence of great love, great compassion, joy, equanimity and fearlessness. These are the motivating forces that can transform situations from fear and danger and restore peace and joy where they have been lost. The peace and joy of the world depend on your peace and joy at this moment.

13. Scripture Recitation

from “*The Lotus of the Wonderful Dharma: Universal Door of The Bodhisattva Who Contemplates the Sounds of the World*”

Opening Verse:

[OFFICIANT 1]

*Chanting the Lotus Sutra by night, the sound shook the galaxies.
The next morning when planet Earth woke up, her lap was full of
flowers.*

Discourse:

[ALL TOGETHER OR READ EACH VERSE ALOUD INDIVIDUALLY]

World-Honored One of ten thousand beautiful aspects, may I ask you this question: “Why did they give that bodhisattva the name Avalokiteśvara?”

The Buddha offered this reply to Akshayamati: “Because actions founded on her deep aspiration can respond to the needs of any being in any circumstance. Aspirations as wide as the oceans were made for countless lifetimes. She has attended to billions of Buddhas, her great aspiration purified by mindfulness.

“Whoever calls her name or sees her image, if their mind be perfectly collected and pure, they will then be able to overcome the duḥkha of all the worlds.

“When those with cruel intent push us into a pit of fire, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, the fire becomes a refreshing lake.

“Adrift on the waters of the great ocean, threatened by monsters of the deep, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, we are saved from the storm waves.

“Standing atop Mount Meru, should someone desire to push us down, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, we dwell unharmed like the sun hanging in space.

“Chased by a cruel person down the Diamond Mountain, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, not even a hair of our body will be in danger.

“Encircled and assaulted by bandits holding swords to wound and to kill, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara sword blades shatter into millions of pieces.

“Imprisoned or bound in iron chains, with hands and feet placed in a yoke, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, we are released into freedom.

“Poisons, curses, and negativity putting us into danger, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, harmful things return to their source.

“Attacked by a fierce and cruel spirit, a poisonous spirit, or unkind spirit, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, they will do us no harm.

“With wild animals all around baring their teeth, tusks, and claws, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara will cause them to run far away

“Confronted with scorpions and poisonous snakes, fire and smoke of poisonous gas, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara they depart, the air clears.

“Caught beneath lightning, thunder, and clouds, with hail pouring down in torrents, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, the storm ends, the sunlight appears.

“All living beings caught in distress, oppressed by immeasurable duḥkha are rescued in ten thousand ways by the wonderful power of her understanding.

“Miraculous power with no shortcoming, wisdom and skillful means so vast — throughout the ten directions, there is no place she does not appear.

“The paths to realms of duḥkha, the pain of birth, old age, sickness, and death, hells, hungry spirits, or animals are all purified, brought to an end.

“Look of truth, look of purity, look of boundless understanding, look of love, look of compassion — the look to be always honored and practiced.

“Look of immaculate light and purity, the Sun of Wisdom destroying darkness, master of fire, wind, and disaster illuminating the whole world.

“Heart of compassion like rolling thunder, heart of love like gentle clouds, water of Dharma nectar raining upon us, extinguishing the fire of afflictions.

“In the courtroom, the place of lawsuits, on the fields in the midst of war, invoking the strength of Avalokiteśvara, our enemies become our friends.

“Sound of wonder, noble sound, sound of one looking deeply into the world, extraordinary sound, sound of the rising tide, the sound to which we will always listen.

“With mindfulness, free from doubts, in moments of danger and affliction, our faith in the purity of Avalokiteśvara is where we go for refuge.

“We bow in gratitude to the one who has all the virtues, regarding the world with compassionate eyes, an Ocean of Well-Being beyond measure.”

14. Praising the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion

[ALL TOGETHER]

From the depths of understanding, a flower of great eloquence blooms:
The Bodhisattva stands majestically upon the waves of birth and death,
free from all afflictions.

Her great compassion eliminates all sickness, even those once thought
of as incurable

Her wondrous light sweeps away all obstacles and dangers.

Her willow branch, once waved, reveals countless Buddha Lands.

Her lotus flower blossoms a multitude of practice centers.

We bow to her. We see her true presence in the here and the now.

We offer her the incense of our hearts.

May the Bodhisattva of Deep Listening embrace us all with Great Compassion.



[OFFICANT 2]

The river of attachment carries living beings away to the sea of duḥkha, where waves of afflictions rise by the thousands to submerge us. In order to transcend the wheel of samsara, with all our concentration and one-point mind, let us now chant to Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion

15. Chanting: “Namo’valokiteshvara”

[AT THE SOUND OF THE BELL EACH PERSON COMES FORWARD, BOWS BEFORE THE ALTAR, OFFERS INCENSE FOR A LOVED ONE, BOWS AND RETURNS TO HIS OR HER SEAT.]

Namo’valokiteshvaraya....*[REPEAT]*

16. Chanting: “Awakening the Source of Love”

[ALL TOGETHER]

We bow respectfully to Avalokiteśvara, 
to your great vow always to be there for all beings,
your capacity to look deeply at the world with compassionate eyes,
listen deeply to understand and to relieve duḥkha,
and with your holy willow branch,
to sprinkle the nectar of immortality,
cleansing our minds of all impurities.

We vow to take refuge in you with all our heart

Respectfully, we offer you our vows:

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

We vow to look deeply into the Five Skandhas of form, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness.

We vow to see the true nature of Śūnyatā.

We vow soon to reach the shore of awakening.

We vow to overcome all obstacles.

We vow to take the boat of Perfect Understanding.

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

We vow to be present in all three bodies.

We vow to realize the fruits of liberation.

We vow to cultivate great compassion.

We vow to understand Buddha-Nature deeply.

We vow to purify our minds.

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

Please help us get out of the abyss of craving.

Please help us dissolve the worries in our minds.

Please give us skillful means.

Please help us build Sangha.

Please help us transform our anger and hatred.

Please help us uproot our ignorance.

Please help us hold the high torch of right faith.

Please give us the clear eyes of understanding.

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

Please place in our hands the golden lotus.

Please allow us to see the Dharma Body.

We vow to build brotherhood and sisterhood.

We vow to show gratitude to our spiritual lineage.

We vow to practice loving speech.

We vow to look with loving eyes.

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

We vow to practice deep listening

We vow to live mindfully and with clarity.

We vow to realize one-pointed concentration.

We vow to walk mindfully night and day.

We vow to abide peacefully in the ground of reality.

We vow to cultivate the five kinds of eyes, and the six higher wisdoms

Namo Avalokiteśvara, 

Please come with us to the war zones, to stop the killing and bombing.

Please walk with us to the places of sickness and duḥkha, bringing
compassionate nectar and medicine.

Please walk with us to the realm of the hungry ghosts, bringing the
dharma food of understanding and love

Please walk with us to the realm of hell in order to cool the heat of
afflictions.

Please walk with us to places of conflict in order to remove hatred and
anger and help the source of love to flow again.

[Homage to the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion] 3x



17. Sitting Meditation

18. The Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva Ceremony Opening

[OFFICIANT 1]

With deep sincerity we offer an invitation to all beings:

Please come and listen! In this world of impermanence, we offer this ceremony to those who have passed on. Further we make dharma offerings to all spirits—those who have found rest and those who are still wandering.

[OFFICIANT 2]

True nature is before thinking. Dharma body has no form. Conditions and relationships appear and disappear like reflections in a mirror. The effects of karma rise and fall like a water bucket rising and falling in a well. We cannot understand this miraculously changing mind. The four elements disperse as in a dream. The six senses, six sense organs and consciousnesses are originally Śūnyatā. To understand that, the Buddha and the eminent teachers return to the place of light.

[OFFICIANT 1]

The sun is setting over the western mountains, the moon is rising in the east.

19. Scripture Recitation

from “Sutra of the Fundamental Vows of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha”

Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva’s Vow:

[OFFICIANT 2]

"Even if the good deeds of beings are as little as a hair, a drop of water, a grain of sand, a mote of dust, or a bit of down, I shall gradually help living beings to liberation. World-Honored One, do not feel distressed

over beings in generations to come. Only after the hells are empty will I become a Buddha.”

Discourse:

[ALL TOGETHER OR READ EACH VERSE ALOUD INDIVIDUALLY]

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva asked the Buddha: “Please World-Honored One tell us in more detail the ways and means by which invoking Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva brings joy and blessings to sentient beings, so that the future generations may understand and practice the dharma.

The Buddha offered this reply: “Whoever recites Kṣitigarbha’s name or sees his image, if their mind be perfectly collected and pure, they will be freed from wrongs committed even thirty kalpas ago.

“Whoever plays music to or chants Kṣitigarbha’s mantra or if they encourage one or more persons to follow them by doing the same, and if their minds be perfectly collected and pure, they will be freed from all intruding evils.

“Whoever bows repeatedly to or chants aloud Kṣitigarbha’s name and states “on behalf of those who are long in the beds of duḥkha, whose illnesses are very great, we make these offerings and pay homage,” repeating the offering in front of the sick or suffering person or within their hearing, if their mind be perfectly collected and pure, they will be freed from all negative karma.

“Whoever bows or chants aloud Kṣitigarbha’s name continuously for forty-nine days on behalf of those who have died, if their minds be perfectly collected and pure, such benefited persons will be assured a favorable rebirth and the pain of loss will be eased.

“Whoever chants the name Kṣitigarbha, or who has even one thought of praise for him, or shows respect for him, please persuade them to persevere in such efforts, and if their minds be perfectly collected and pure, they will achieve inconceivable merits in the present and in future.

“Please tell those who have frightening visions to chant to Kṣitigarbha before images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for three or seven times. If they cannot do this themselves, ask someone else to act for them, and if their minds be perfectly collected and pure, all unsettled energies will be relieved and liberated.

“If parents at the advent of newly born children, chant Kṣitigarbha’s name ten thousand times, with minds perfectly collected and pure, then the newly-born children will gather love and compassion throughout their lives.

“Dwellers on earth who act unmindfully in their daily life in such a way to cause harm, steal, commit adultery, lie or become intoxicated are advised to chant Kṣitigarbha’s name before images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for ten days within a month, once a day, with minds perfectly collected and pure, their duḥkha will ease within seven to ten miles of distance throughout the ten directions.

“Since Kṣitigarbha made such great vows many kalpas ago to bring joy and blessings to sentient beings, it is the duty of all to harmonize with those vows and to spread them.”

After listening to what the Buddha said, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva replied: “I prostrate, go for refuge, and make offerings to the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha who has immeasurable compassion for me and all sentient beings who are suffering and whose minds are obscured, who has

qualities like the sky and liberates sentient beings from all duḥkha and gives every happiness.”

20. Invocation of The Bodhisatva Kṣitigarbha

[ALL TOGETHER]

We invoke your name, Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva. We aspire to learn your way so as to be present where there is darkness, duḥkha, oppression, and despair, so that we may bring light, hope, relief, and liberation to those places.

We are determined not to forget about or abandon those who are in desperate situations. We will do our best to establish contact with them when they cannot find a way out of their suffering and when their cries for help, justice, equality, and human rights are not heard.

We know that hell can be found in many places on earth and we do not want to contribute to making more hells on earth. Rather we want to help unmake the hells that already exist. We will practice to realize the qualities of perseverance and stability that belong to the earth so that, like the earth, we can always be supportive and faithful to those who need us.

[OFFICIANT 2]

If you suffer in the painful realms, please listen so that the fire of karma may be extinguished and that you may be freed from duḥkha. With all our concentration and one-point mind, let us chant to Kṣitigarbha, Bodhisattva of Great Aspiration.

21. Chanting: Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva Mantra

[ONCE CHANT BEGINS EACH PERSON COMES FORWARD, BOWS BEFORE THE ALTAR, OFFERS INCENSE FOR A LOVED ONE, BOWS AND RETURNS TO HIS OR HER SEAT.]

[ALL TOGETHER]



om pra mani dhani soha....*[REPEAT]*

22. Sitting Meditation

23. Closing Chant

[ALL TOGETHER]

This body is not me. I am not limited by this body. I am life without boundaries. I have never been born, and I have never died.

Look at the ocean and the sky filled with stars, manifestations from my wondrous true mind.

Since before time, I have been free. Birth and death are only doors through which we pass, sacred thresholds on our journey. Birth and death are a game of hide-and-seek.

So smile with me, hold my hand, let us say good-bye, say good-bye, in order to meet again soon. We meet today. We will meet again tomorrow. We will meet at the source of every moment. We meet each other in all forms of life.



24. Sharing the Merit

[ALL TOGETHER]

Reciting the sutras, practicing the way of awareness gives rise to benefits without limit.

We vow to share these fruits with all beings.

We vow to offer tribute to parents, teachers, friends, and the numerous beings who give guidance and support along the path.

May we in this life find awakening and together all become Buddhas and save all beings.

25. Extinguish Candles

[EXTINGUISH ALTAR CANDLES - LEFT TO RIGHT] [EXTINGUISH SMALL LIGHTING CANDLE IF IT IS LIT]

[COVER WATER & RICE OFFERING BOWLS—LEFT TO RIGHT]

26. Three Bows

[ FOR EACH BOW] 3x

END OF SERVICE