

This is one of those talks that you never think you will ever give but you know that someday you might have to make. Consequently you put the thought out of your mind and never think about it again. Sort of like death and taxes, you put it off until you absolutely *have* to think about it. This is one of those moments in time where a page is turned, a door is closed and another one is opened.

With very much mixed emotion I have to announce that I have decided to leave Zenshuji to become the new resident minister at Taishoji Temple in Hilo, Hawaii. Zenshuji has been my spiritual home for the last 15 years so it was not an easy decision to decide to leave. I have come to know many members over the years and have greatly valued everyone's support and friendship. This has been a community that I have been proud to be a part of and will miss greatly.

The timing for my departure has not been firmly established due to the complicated arrangements and permissions that have to be made and arrived at. Sometime in the next month or two is as close as can be determined.

I have tried to make my decision to leave not solely based on selfish motivation. My decision was based on what, I felt, would be the best for all parties concerned. There comes a time in one's spiritual development where leaving the comfort of ones own nest is more beneficial to all even if that cannot be clearly seen at the time. This is a time in my life where I felt that I should stand on my own and make my own way. Being firmly planted in the beginnings of middle age I have felt this need, perhaps more keenly, than at other stages in my life especially as I see the fall of life more clearly ahead of me.

Of course I did not make this decision all on my own as there are many parties involved, many people had to be consulted with the counsel and permission of Bishop Akiba playing a key role. My deepest thanks to Bishop Akiba for his many hours of wise consultation and ultimately for his approval.

My decision was not made to get away from something, for clearly I would have been happy to stay at Zenshuji indefinitely, but rather to go towards something. Taishoji Temple has many of the same difficulties as Zenshuji has been faced with, with the exception that they have had no resident full time minister for several years. I look forward to this new challenge as I feel my background and experience are well suited to their situation.

This is not a goodbye as I know I will be back to see everyone many times in the coming years and now everyone has an excuse to visit Hilo so I know I will see some of you again very soon. I do hope you come and visit but I ask that you wait awhile so that I can unpack first!

This is also an opportunity for Zenshuji to take stock and reenergize as you move forward in a time beyond my presence. This can be a an exiting time as you begin to formulate what you want the future of Zenshuji to look like. A time to chart a new future. I hope everyone vigorously takes part in this next chapter of the history of Zenshuji and to let your voices be heard. Decisions cannot be

made in a vacuum where more voices allow for better decisions and better outcomes.

I leave knowing that Zenshuji is in good hands because the goodness that is in Zenshuji lies with it's Sangha. The Sangha is the third part of the Triple Treasure and I have always felt "treasure" is the best way to describe all of you.

In Deepest Gassho and gratitude,

Myoshin lang