



STONE CREEK ZEN CENTER

Ethics Policy

Guidelines for Ethical Violations, Conflict Resolution and Informal Concerns

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the ethics and conflict resolution guidelines of Stone Creek Zen Center (SCZC) is to have a policy that supports and protects the harmony and well-being of the Sangha members, teachers, and the Sangha as a whole. The guidelines and procedures rely on the sixteen precepts of Zen Buddhism as their basis.

Our practice, whether as teachers or practitioners, is to be as awake, aware, and kind as we can be, living in a way that fosters the well-being of everyone. At Stone Creek we have a vibrant connection, and so we must bring extra attention to the well-being and harmony of our Sangha. It is essential that an environment of trust and openness prevail, so that all of us feel free to let go of the fears that hinder our clarity, and to open our hearts to the dharma. Practice is based on trust, respect, and true communication.

The Precepts As Our Constant Guide

The Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts are a strong and flexible container and a teacher, rather than an absolute code. The Precepts help us bring awareness and understanding to all our actions as we meet the ever-changing conditions of life

We each have personal standards of how we observe the Precepts. Our group life is a different situation, with its own energies and its own potentials for misunderstanding and trouble that can lead to abuse. To meet this group reality, we need shared standards, as well as our individual standards. SCZC is a practice community and a non-profit organization. We are not a workplace and we do not live in a residential practice community. We regularly study and practice together in different ways—our daily and Sunday schedules, sesshins, community celebrations and meetings bring us into close contact with each other. We exchange money, eat together, engage in ceremonies, and share physical spaces. We welcome everyone regardless of age, religion, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, education or socioeconomic status.

The Precepts are an expression of the underlying truth that all human actions have an ethical aspect, as all human actions bear consequences. The Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts are central to the practice of Zen and to participation at SCZC, and they are essential to the well-being of the Sangha. If a person is unwilling to abide by the Precepts, the person may be asked to leave SC.

While the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts are the foundation of our vows, SCZC recognizes that ethical standards and guidelines are needed to provide a conscious process and forum for SCZC practitioners and teachers ‘to be seen and heard’ when difficulties arise. This

policy and these guidelines are in force throughout the center, indoors and out, in all gatherings both formal and informal, and at events off-site that are sponsored by the center.

Taking Refuge in the Triple Treasures

In the context of Sangha life, the teachers sit in the Buddha seat as representatives of and guides for the process of awakening. The Dharma is both the underlying nature of reality and, critically, the teachings that express reality in human terms. And Sangha is the community of all the people who practice at SCZC. Taking refuge is turning to the Triple Treasure for guidance and support.

The Three Pure Precepts

The three Pure Precepts are the Buddha's fundamental definition of enlightened action. In the Mahayana, including Zen, they are: to refrain from doing evil, to do all that is good, and to benefit all beings.

1. To refrain from doing evil is to practice restraint. It requires us to be aware of our actions and their consequences. In Sangha life we each have to watch out for envy, and for competitive and judgmental attitudes, and to guard our tongue.
2. To do what is good is to act with care for the sake of all beings and the earth we inhabit. It calls for relinquishing our self-centered views and recognizing our deep interdependence. In Sangha life each of us has to make an effort to listen and to do our part.
3. To benefit the myriad beings is to embrace the bodhisattva path. It asks us to see all beings as we truly are and to open our hearts to each other, continually clarifying our understanding and our compassion. It is to vow to live together wide awake.

The 10 Bodhisattva Precepts

1. Do not kill. Do not cut off life. We are recipients of the precious gift of life, in common with all beings. This precept goes beyond taking life; we must not kill the aspiration for growth and goodness in each other.
2. Do not steal. Do not take what is not given. We commit to cultivating and living from generosity, rather than interacting from places of fear, narrowness and contraction.

3. Do not misuse sexuality. Acknowledging and honoring our sexuality is part of creating an environment where conscious, mindful and compassionate relationships can be cultivated. Everyone coming to SCZC has the right to the respect and safety provided by appropriate sexual boundaries, and the right to be free from harassment. This precept includes sexually abusive speech. It is considered a misuse of authority and responsibility for a SCZC teacher to engage in sexual behavior with a practitioner in the SCZC Sangha.

4. Do not lie. Lying creates an atmosphere of mistrust and confusion. Honesty, openness and transparency are characteristics of a community where we feel free to open to truth without fear.

5. Do not indulge in intoxicants. Using substances to hide from the reality of our lives is self-destructive. We commit to bringing awareness and clarity to the ways that we escape and avoid difficult or unpleasant situations and to meet reality as it is. Anyone coming to SCZC while under the influence of an intoxicant will be asked to leave.

6. Do not speak ill of others. Gossip and slander cause pain to the people ill-spoken of, and they lead to discord in the community. Open communication and transparency are the grounds of the mutual support and understanding that encourage trust, creating a reliable place to practice at SCZC.

7. Do not praise yourself at the expense of others. Praising oneself or seeking personal gain at the expense of others arises out of a misunderstanding of the interdependent nature of self. Be willing to take responsibility for mistakes that have been made; practice humility.

8. Do not be greedy or possessive. Clinging to status, to the teachings, or to a practice position leads to divisiveness in the community. All positions at SCZC are for the support of everyone's practice and awakening. SCZC belongs to us all as we take up different responsibilities for the well-being of everyone. Generosity is essential to practicing the bodhisattva path.

9. Do not indulge in anger. Sangha members having conflicts or tensions with others should attempt to resolve them directly in a spirit of honesty, humility and kindness. When allowed to grow unchecked, and especially when fueled by self-righteousness, anger can cause serious damage to the harmonious functioning of the community. Observing our anger shows us those places where we are rigid and defended, helping us let go of fixed and oppositional views.

10. Do not defile the Three Treasures. Our teachers, the teaching and the community are all facets of a single practice. Our conduct and all our acts of body, speech and mind matter. The aspiration to awaken flourishes in an environment of gratitude and respect.

SCZC ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee is a standing committee of Sangha members that handles formal ethical complaints, conflict resolution, and informal sangha disputes according to these guidelines.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The guidelines provide a format for students and teachers to explore any questions, confusion, expectations, conflicts and misunderstandings. Disputes may arise in the Sangha that are not considered ethical in nature, but nonetheless can create tension and disharmony in the community if not addressed. An informal complaint would be the means to resolve such a situation. In the case of a possible ethical violation, or of an unresolved informal complaint, the Committee would turn to a formal procedure.

Teacher/Practitioner Relationships

SCZC has both ordained and lay teachers. Not every priest is a teacher. The list of teachers is posted on the dokusan list on the bulletin board.

Committed teacher-student relationships are founded on deep trust and respect. It is important to note that because of the very complex and intimate nature of the teacher-student relationship, transference* and projection** often arise as a normal part of the practice. These are not ethical violations, but they are sensitive, and practitioners may benefit from discussing these issues with SCZC teachers other than the teacher concerned or with senior community members.

The authority of the teacher carries with it an increased responsibility to avoid situations and actions that could result in harm to their student, to any practitioner, or to the community. Harm may result if a teacher and practitioner become sexually or inappropriately emotionally involved, or if a teacher violates trust, or uses power or position for personal ends.

The responsibility for maintaining appropriate and clear boundaries primarily rests with the teacher. The teachers at SCZC are committed to respecting and protecting the personal autonomy of all students, and to refraining from sexual involvement or misleading behavior with students. If a teacher feels unable to uphold this standard, they will seek guidance and counsel from a senior teacher in this lineage. If a Sangha practitioner feels that appropriate

boundaries have been crossed, it is recommended to arrange a confidential conversation with a member of the ethics committee.

* Transference is the process by which emotions and desires originally associated with a parent or caretaker are unconsciously shifted to another person. It is a natural occurrence in any important relationship.

** Projection is a process by which spiritual authority and power are attributed to priests and teachers because of their roles and functions.

Priest and Head Priest Conduct (Article 7.3, SCZC Bylaws')

Priests practicing at Stone Creek Zen Center, whether in training, serving on staff, or as teachers, whether ordained within this Sangha or elsewhere, are part of the Sangha and shall follow these guidelines like all other Sangha practitioners. Priests are committed by their vows to follow a high standard of conduct, to serve the Sangha, to preserve wholesome relationships with other Sangha practitioners, and to act in ways that respect the meaning of the Dharma robe—the okesa.

Because the okesa manifests the Dharma, all Sangha practitioners have a right to expect priests to aim strenuously to accord with the Dharma in their conduct. Priests shall follow a high standard of conduct in regard to the Ten Grave Precepts because, due to their robe and vows, their conduct affects the entire Sangha.

Sangha Relationships

Sangha practitioners are encouraged to use the Ethics Committee to mediate conflicts and misunderstandings in order to foster clear communication and a harmonious practice environment. An effective and compassionate intervention is crucial for fostering good communication among Sangha members who are affected by a disturbance between them, even if only one party feels disturbed.

Such conflict can result from a disagreement, causing uneasiness or discomfort as well as anger, resentment, or a sense of not being heard. If not addressed, conflict can easily get worse and spread, causing severe distress and having a disruptive effect on the whole Sangha.

Confidentiality

Matters discussed in dokusan between an SCZC teacher and a practitioner are kept in confidence by the teacher. If they wish to do so, students are welcome to discuss

meaningful insights gained in teacher-student meetings among themselves to deepen their understanding.

A teacher may decide to consult with another SCZC teacher to clarify an issue regarding a practitioner. All such conversations will be kept in strict confidence between the teachers. A practitioner may request that a specific information not be shared with anyone. There may be circumstances in which it is necessary for a teacher to consult a professional for legal or psychological expertise. Such consultations are to be kept in confidence and only undertaken in the interests of the Sangha and the practitioner, but disclosure of confidential information might occur.

Teachers are mandated by law to report suspected abuse and suicidal ideation and, in these situations, confidentiality cannot be kept.

Use of Power and Position

The teachers at SCZC recognize that individuals in positions of confidence or trust must not misuse status or authority to achieve privileges or other considerations, or to inappropriately influence others. To be involved in Sangha life, with teachers, is not exactly the same as secular social life, though there is much overlap. It is a fact that most people experience a power differential between teachers and practitioners. This is part of Zen practice and something we all must be mindful of. It exists for the possibility of awakening; it is the power to confer benefit. Taking this into account, teachers need to be careful. Practitioners need to be respectful, but also to feel able to speak truthfully to teachers without intimidation—though this takes some courage. Teachers too must be able to speak freely to practitioners about the practitioners' personal conduct and its potential effect on their practice.

Romantic Relationships Among Sangha Members

In promoting intimate discussion in the context of zazen practice we are asking people to be as open to one another as they feel comfortable being, and this may lead to instances of affection and even romance between Sangha members.

Romantic relationships between Sangha members are fine. But for everyone's safety these relationships need to be conducted with full respect, restraint, and care. This means no inappropriate speech, no flirting at the zendo or at zendo-sponsored events, and no

harassment (see below) of any kind. If a romantic relationship between Sangha members ends in a way that leaves one or both with difficulties in practicing together at SCZC, either or both can apply to the ethics committee for help.

Harassment

Harassment takes many forms. Some examples include but are not limited to the following:

1. Jokes, insults, threats, sarcasm and inappropriate comments about a person's race, color, sex, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, physical or mental disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or other status protected by law.
 2. Unwelcome sexual advances, sexual remarks, displays of offensive material, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Sensitivity to harassment varies from one person to the other. We aim to ensure that everyone feels as validated as possible.

Financial Matters

SCZC officers entrusted with handling funds or assets on behalf of practitioners bear responsibility to provide accountable and transparent stewardship. SCZC financial records are available on request.

Professional or Business Relationships within the Sangha:

Sangha members shall not be the subject of marketing or promotion of services and products particularly by non-members of the Sangha. Sangha members are discouraged from using the community as a source of business, contract work, or professional clients. SCZC teachers and Sangha members who work as physicians, psychotherapists, attorneys, shall avoid entering into professional relationships with other Sangha members. It is understood, however, that exchange of goods and services (except professional services listed above) is wholly appropriate among Sangha members. SCZC makes no recommendation and has no responsibility regarding these business relationships.

ETHICAL ISSUES AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

In consultation with the senior teachers, the Board will appoint a standing committee on ethical conduct to receive complaints and conflicts and oversee their resolution. Sangha practitioners are encouraged to use the Ethics Committee to mediate conflicts of any size and to foster clear communication. Procedures for dealing with informal and formal complaints are intended to foster growth in understanding, compassion and harmony in the Sangha. The Ethics Committee responds to all concerns, complaints, misunderstandings and disputes, whether by or about Sangha members, visitors, volunteers, the Board of Directors, or any SCZC teachers. If a committee member is the subject of a complaint, the Board and senior teachers will appoint a substitute member for the investigation of that complaint.

All Sangha practitioners (including priests and teachers) are expected to follow the established and posted ethical guidelines of SZCZ, and to participate in its ethics and conflict resolution process.

Procedures for Submitting a Complaint

A complaint may be submitted verbally or in writing to any member of the Ethics Committee. The member will inform the whole committee of the complaint and a preliminary assessment will be made that takes into account the nature and seriousness of the matter and who needs to be brought into the process of resolution. A teacher who is not a subject of the complaint may be consulted. The committee's liaison to the Board will be kept informed as appropriate. The names of committee members and contact information will be posted in the Sangha room.

Taking into account the needs of the parties to a complaint for confidentiality and the needs of the Sangha for transparency and relevant information, the committee will decide the optimal way to report to the Sangha that a complaint is being addressed while respecting the confidentiality rights of the parties involved.

Processing Complaints

After the preliminary assessment and further consultation with the complainant, a recommendation will be made as to how to proceed with the complaint, deciding whether the complaint process should be informal or formal, and whom to notify. The process of fact gathering and complaint resolution will be determined on a case-by-case basis as

appropriate to the situation and parties involved. Every effort will be made by the Committee to pursue an investigation or resolution process in a timely manner.

In certain situations, with approval of the Board of Directors and the SCZC teachers, consultation with an outside resource or mediator may be appropriate and may be recommended by the Committee. For example, should a serious complaint arise concerning activities of one of the SCZC teachers, a teacher from outside of SCZC can be asked to aid the Committee in arriving at a just resolution to the conflict. The SZBA (Soto Zen Buddhist Association) can be contacted for a referral to an outside teacher.

Informal Complaint Resolution Process

If a conflict arises with a teacher or a fellow Sangha member, it is recommended that the people involved first try to address the problem directly among themselves. If they are unable to reach resolution, any or all parties to the conflict may contact the Ethics Committee. Issues involving misunderstandings and discord regarding SCZC policies and protocols may also be addressed to the Ethics Committee.

One or more members of the Committee will listen to the concerns of all parties and try to create an environment of listening and open communication wherein the parties feel safe to explore the nature of the problem and, as appropriate, speak directly to one another. In some cases, it might be most effective to use council—a listening process familiar to our Sangha and an age-old practice that involves bringing people together in a circle to bear witness and share authentically. A practitioner seeking this approach can ask the Ethics Committee to organize such a group, and the Committee can facilitate it or ask a Sangha member outside the Committee to do so, with the agreement of the person bringing the concern. The person bringing the concern may also designate an advocate to represent them and speak on their behalf.

In this process everyone involved will be asked to use the Sixteen Precepts as their guide, to help us rely on our deep connection to one another as we seek an understanding and clarity that goes beyond our limited views. If mistakes have been made, we need to acknowledge them and move in the direction of acceptance and forgiveness. This is our practice. All conversations are confidential unless legal requirements oblige us to do otherwise. If there is a further need for support or in providing discernment and resolution of the concern, two or more members of the Committee will meet with both parties involved, individually or together, to provide mediation.

Formal Process For Addressing Ethical Concerns

Maintaining the well-being of the Sangha is the mutual responsibility of all members. Our intention is to foster growth in understanding, compassion, harmony, and safety in the Sangha. If you feel that the guidelines provided by the Three Treasures and the Precepts have not been observed and you have not been able to resolve your concerns through an informal process, you may initiate a formal process to resolve the issue. Serious issues addressed by the Ethics Committee may include improper use of authority, discrimination, harmful speech, fiduciary irregularities, sexual misconduct, or harm from drugs or alcohol.

In moving forward, it is important to remember that in the history of Buddhist communities, students have on many occasions been taken advantage of by their teachers and ethical violations have been committed which have not been heard or redressed. Likewise teachers have also been falsely accused of ethical violations. Sometimes the actions of a practitioner or a teacher can be misinterpreted as sexual interest and appear as a potential ethical breach. A teacher's reputation as well as a practitioner's can be seriously harmed by a false accusation. This should be taken into account before a formal ethics hearing process is instituted.

As any ethics process unfolds, Sangha members who may be aware of the situation need to be cautioned to be extremely careful about what they say. In the emotionally charged atmosphere that such an event will usually foster, even seemingly innocent words or characterizations are sure to reach the ears of almost everyone, and in the process seem hurtful, and can make resolution more difficult. This may not be preventable but senior Sangha members should do everything they can to speak (or refrain from speaking) in such a way as to minimize such hurt.

Both parties must from the outset strive to preserve the privacy and reputation of everyone involved. Everyone will be required to maintain confidentiality regarding what is said.

Step 1. Bringing a Concern

A formal process is initiated by communicating in writing to any member of the Ethics Committee. This "Letter of Request" must include:

- 1) A clear statement that a formal ethics hearing process is requested
- 2) The name of the person(s) involved and a description of the incident
- 3) A description of prior attempts to resolve the matter
- 4) A statement of the resolution sought

Step 2. Accepting a Concern

Once the Ethics Committee has received a letter of request, they will make a decision by majority vote and convey to the requester acceptance or non-acceptance of the matter for

formal hearing. In the event the matter is accepted for a formal hearing, the Committee will also notify the persons named in the Letter of Request, as appropriate, and will notify the SCZC board and the senior teachers.

Step 3. Hearing a Concern

The Ethics Committee will schedule a private hearing for the persons involved—individually and, if possible, together—to have a full and fair opportunity to present their understanding of the matter to the committee. The Committee may ask questions and request information.

The process will proceed in the spirit of neutral inquiry and during the proceedings the Committee will check with both parties regularly to make sure they feel their side is being adequately heard and addressed in the process. (If the matter is fiduciary, transparency is important and relevant bank statements, billings, and other relevant documents are to be provided. Expediency with documentation is required.)

The panel may also include other appropriate mediators or experts from the Buddhist community or outside of it, including dispute resolution professionals. The Committee will select this panel in consultation with the parties involved and decide the appropriate number—all parties involved in the concern will be in attendance. The Board and the senior teachers will be informed and asked for guidance as needed.

4. Ethics Committee decision

Once the Committee determines that it is sufficiently informed of the matter at hand, it will close the hearing period and deliberate. The Committee will work toward a consensus opinion where possible. Every effort will be made by the Committee to pursue an investigation or resolution process in a timely manner. The Committee will write a draft decision and this draft decision will be reviewed and signed by both parties, demonstrating their acceptance of the decision. The Committee will then bring it to the SCZC Board and senior teachers for review, questions, and revisions as needed.

Recommendations and Findings

The final report of the decision will then be made to the parties involved, the Board of Directors, the Head Priest and the Abiding Teacher. All of them, along with the full Ethics Committee, will sign the report to signal their acceptance of the findings. This leadership group will decide in what way and to what degree to make the findings and decision available to the SCZC Sangha. It will then be filed in a secure SCZC confidential file. The written decision will be held for seven days before making it available or filing it, to allow time for a request for appeal. It is not possible to anticipate every kind of situation that may appear through the countless causes and conditions that might require a resolution. Our

hope is that through a fair and transparent process a mutual consensus will arise. The Committee will strive for a wise and compassionate decision that preserves Sangha unity and benefits all parties.

See Appendix A for possible courses for resolutions and decisions

Appeal Process

If one of the parties disagrees with the conclusion of the Ethics Committee process, they may request an appeal. To file an appeal, a formal letter must be submitted to the SCZC Board within seven days of receiving the written decision. The SCZC Board will inform the Committee and form a panel of two SCZC teachers. This panel will review the matter with the Committee, the complainant, and the other party to the complaint. An appeal will be heard if it is deemed that the Committee made procedural errors or that the decision was arbitrary, incomplete, or without sufficient evidentiary basis. If this panel agrees with the Committee, they will inform the Board and the Senior Teachers. The final decision is up to the Board, which will notify the parties in writing.

If the two SCZC teachers do not reach agreement with the Ethics Committee decision, the two Senior Teachers will be called into the process. In consultation with the Committee, the two SCZC teachers who handled the appeal, and the Board, the Senior Teachers will render a decision. In consultation with the Senior Teachers, the board may decide at this point to form a new committee to review the matter or call in an outside mediator (if a professional mediator is hired, costs are accrued by SCZC).

The appeal process is the same for the complainant and the other party to the complaint if they are members of the general body of the Sangha. If the appeal is made by a priest, a member of the Board or a Senior Teacher, the Board (less the board member making the appeal) will directly seek outside mediation or conflict resolution. The signed appeal decision is to be handed down by the board, signed by the parties and filed in a SCZC confidential file. The conclusions of the decision will be made available to the Sangha in a summary form that both protects privacy and avoids secrecy.

A Sangha practitioner who does not participate in a grievance and conflict resolution process when requested or who does not abide by a decision of the Committee may be required to leave the Sangha.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Recommendations and Findings

Every effort will be made by the Committee to pursue an investigation or resolution process in a timely manner. A report of findings/outcomes will be made to the complainant, the Board of Directors, the SCZC teachers and filed in the office.

Partial List of Possible Resolutions by the Ethics Committee

This is a partial list of possible resolutions, intended to encourage open-minded and creative decisions. While it is not possible to anticipate every kind of situation which might require resolution, the goal is to ensure a process that benefits all.

- Limiting the decision simply to whether or not an ethical transgression occurred.
- Finding no ethical breach while acknowledging the existence of a problem which needs resolution elsewhere.
- Private conversation with the teacher or student or both about findings
- Follow up meetings with the guiding teacher or teacher of choice.
- Request for an agreement by both parties that the complaint be dismissed after the process reveals a misunderstanding that can be resolved without a further hearing.
- Direct or mediated private apology.
- Suggested referral to professional mediation process
- Recommended education or training or intervention program (for instance therapy or relevant 12 step program)
- Apology to the community.
- Suggested referral to a Restorative Justice Circle process
- Recommendation of a period of probation, with probationary terms set by the Ethics Committee.
- Recommendation of a teacher's suspension from teaching (to be approved by majority of full Ethics Committee, the SCZC board, and senior teachers not under prospective suspension.

APPENDIX B

Outline of Ethics Committee Complaint and Resolution Process

Informal

- Encourage parties to discuss and attempt to resolve directly
- One or more committee members are available to skillfully “coach” process.

Formal *–If the informal process does not lead to resolution–*

Bringing a Concern

- Complainant submits “Letter of Request” including
 1. Clear statement of request
 2. Name of person(s) involved
 3. Description of prior attempts to resolve issue
 4. Statement of the resolution sought

Accepting a Concern

- Committee (by majority vote) decides if matter will have formal hearing
- Committee informs SCZC board

Hearing a Concern

- Committee (in consultation with all parties) determines panel participants
- Private hearing scheduled and held (all concerned to attend hearing)

Committee Decision

- Once the panel determines it is sufficiently informed, hearing is closed
- Panel deliberates and works toward consensus opinion (majority vote may be required)
- Panel produces written summary of findings and outcomes and reports to the SCZC Board
- SCZC Board approves a written statement of the decision
- The statement is reviewed and signed by all parties involved, the Committee and the Board.
- The summary of findings and outcomes and signed statement of the decision are to be stored in a confidential file on the SCZC Google site

Appeal Process

- A formal letter must be presented to the Committee and the SCZC board within 7 days
- Board forms panel of 2 SCZC teachers

- The 2 SCZC teachers review with the Committee, complainant and other party to the complaint
- Panel decides if appeal will be heard
- If the 2 SCZC teachers agree with the Committee they will notify the board and senior teachers. The final decision is made by the board
- Board notifies the parties in writing
- If the 2 SCZC teachers cannot reach an agreement, then 2 senior teachers will be called into the process
- After consultation with the Committee, 2 SCZC teachers, and the board, the 2 senior teachers render a decision
- In consultation with the senior teachers, the board may opt to form a new committee or call in a mediator (costs of mediation accrued by SCZC)
- If the appeal is made by a priest, a member of the board or a senior teacher, the board (less the board member making the appeal), will seek outside mediation or conflict resolution
- The board notifies all parties of the appeal decision in writing and all parties sign the notification, which is then filed in a SCZC confidential file

GLOSSARY

Sangha Member: anyone who participates at Stone Creek Zen Center (SCZC), whether being a contributing member or not.

Contributing Member: an individual committed to supporting SCZC through regular dues.

Practitioner: a person who practices Zen and is not a formally designated teacher

Student: a sangha member who has developed a relationship with a teacher.

Priest: a person who received a formal priest ordination in a recognized Buddhist lineage.

Teacher: a person who received formal authorization to teach Zen in a recognized lineage. A teacher may be a priest or a lay person.

Lay Teacher: a lay person who has received authorization to teach Zen in a recognized lineage.

Senior Teacher: Head Priest or Abiding Teacher.

Head Priest: The titular head of SCZC, who is in charge of overseeing practice affairs and works closely with the board to lead SCZC.

Abiding Teacher: A teacher who has been the Head Priest and has stepped aside from that position to teach and co-lead practice at SCZC.

