



September 15, 2009

Dear Sangha,

From August 14-16 the Chagdud Gonpa Board of Directors and a quorum of the Board of Trustees (which currently includes most of the lamas ordained by Chagdud Rinpoche) met at Rigdzin Ling to discuss the current structure of Chagdud Gonpa Foundation (CGF), look back over the past seven years since Chagdud Rinpoche's paranirvana, and consider CGF's future activity. We had input from some CGF lamas unable to attend as well as many center and practice group coordinators by letter, and we spent the weekend sharing our understanding of Chagdud Rinpoche's intentions for our sangha, and our aspirations for how we can best fulfill those intentions.

Out of that shared understanding we made the following changes that we felt would be of benefit to the sangha as a whole. You are welcome to contact us to discuss any questions or comments you may have.

According to the Bylaws of Chagdud Gonpa Foundation North America, the Spiritual Director of the organization also serves as the President and Chairman of the Board of Directors. In 1995 Chagdud Rinpoche appointed Lama Drimed Norbu as his successor in a ceremony at Rigdzin Ling that many of the Chagdud Gonpa sangha attended. Lama Drimed has served fully in this role since Rinpoche's paranirvana in 2002. Everyone attending the meeting unanimously reaffirmed their commitment to Lama Drimed as the Spiritual Director and heart of Chagdud Gonpa. Lama Drimed has been traveling since the end of his three-year retreat in 2007, meeting with and teaching new students, and it has become apparent that additional support for his organizational role as President would be helpful to his activity. In order to create this support, the Board of Directors, with the recommendation of the Board of Trustees present, named Lama Padma Gyatso to fill a new position as Vice President and Head Lama of Chagdud Gonpa Foundation working under Lama Drimed in his role as Spiritual Director and President. Kim McLaughlin is currently holding the position of a second Vice President, as is Pat Von Alten in the position of Treasurer.

The Board approved the following description of the duties of this new position of Head Lama:

- To oversee the administrative functions and policies at CGF centers and practice groups
- To establish and maintain the spiritual program of CGF centers and practice groups under the guidance of Lama Drimed as Spiritual Director
- To report to the Spiritual Director and Board of Directors as requested
- To appoint a working group of CGF members to implement its administrative policies and functions

Many of you know Lama Padma as the director of Amrita, CGF's center in Seattle. He has been a student of the Dharma for over forty years, studying with Kalu Rinpoche and Dezhung Rinpoche before becoming a student of Chagdud Rinpoche in 1982. He has taught at many of the CGF centers, primarily in the Northwest, as well as serving several prison sanghas during the past ten years. After translating CGF's current Chenrezig practice from the Tibetan and being authorized as a lineage holder for the practice by Tromge Dechen Kyabje Wangpo, of Tromge Gonpa in Tibet, he has held the annual Chenrezig drubchen in Seattle. He also oversees Chokdrup Ling, CGF's retreat land in southwest Colorado.

Lama Padma will be traveling to CGF centers and practice groups in the near future to meet with sangha members directly, in order to learn more about their concerns and interests as he begins this new phase of activity as Head Lama.

In addition to welcoming Lama Padma in this new role, another main focus of the gathering was to reconfirm Rigdzin Ling as Chagdud Rinpoche's seat in North America, and as the mother center of Chagdud Gonpa Foundation. Under the guidance of Lama Drimed and Allison Rader, Rigdzin Ling renewed its commitment to holding a schedule of Dharma teachings and retreats that are available to the entire sangha. The administrative structure for the foundation is going to be reorganized, overseen by Lama Padma, and details of those changes will be shared with everyone as they take shape.

Spread out as the Chagdud Gonpa lamas are over two continents, the meeting was primarily marked by a heartfelt commitment of the Lamas and Board members present to continue to work together to offer Dharma teachings and opportunities for spiritual practice to the full extent that each person has been empowered to do so by Chagdud Rinpoche. We were inspired to create additional opportunities for sangha, center coordinators, and Lamas to gather together to both practice and share our experiences.

In the Dharma,

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