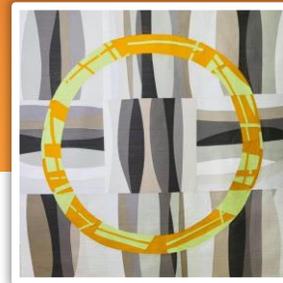


Peacemaker Quilts

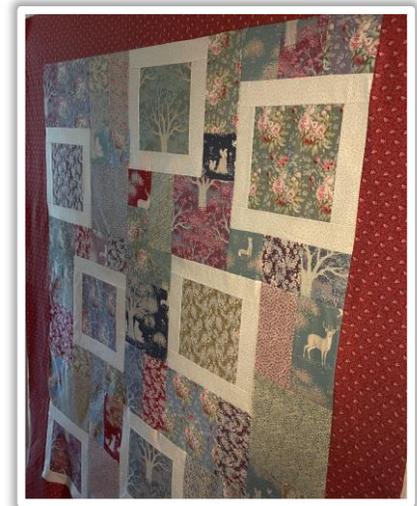
Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community



Patchwork, Zen, and Comfort

As far back as the Buddha, making patchwork robes has been an important spiritual practice. We sew a fragmented world back into wholeness. Dogen writes at length about the treasure of every piece of discarded, donated, used, and purchased cloth. Making a sacred object from devalued materials reminds us of the dignity of every single thing and the healing power of compassion in our lives.

Our Zen Peacemaker Quilts will be communally made by many hands working together. We will take the old practice of patchwork sewing and create homemade gifts for children currently in the foster care system.



Our first patchwork quilt made by Joshin!

How to Begin!

Set Your Heart Toward Love.

Imagine that the work of your hands will bring joy to a child's life. Realizing this, nothing can go wrong. Your effort will be appreciated.

Collect Fabric. Get Creative.

This is a fun part of quilting. Cotton, kid-friendly fabrics with a pleasing color palette. Kid themes are great. Get creative and make it fun! Directions below will tell you how much fabric you need.



Hands of Compassion, by Mayumi Oda



Consider Sewing with Friends!

Perhaps you have a group of friends who would like to do this together. Gather them around the table or on Zoom, put on some tea, and let your friendship get sewn into each stitch.

Set Aside the Time.

Having some time set aside each day for creative practice can bring joy, focus, and energy into your life. Schedule it in! We'll have some deadlines to meet to finish the quilts in a timely way. We will sew this winter to give away the quilts by Fall 2022. Quilters will be waiting at Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community to put the final works of art together.



One Pattern, Countless Possibilities.

We will be using one block pattern that can be put together in different ways, so that every quilt will be unique. You can choose whatever contrasting themes, colors, and fabric you like. Just be sure that your fabric is 100% cotton and washed and dried before you sew. Bold contrasts work well.

Help is on the Way!

If you need help, just ask. Several of us will be available to troubleshoot and give advice along the way.



Ready. Set. Sew!

All finished quilts will be twin size and will be given to children in the foster care system. There are over 420,000 children in foster care in the US right now. Vermont alone has over 1,100 children in foster care, and according to the Casey Family Foundation, the state has one of the highest per capita rates of children entering foster care in the nation. According to the Children's Defense Fund, a child in the US is removed from their home and placed in foster care every two minutes. Neglect, a reliable proxy for the consequences of poverty, was by far the most common reason for children entering the child welfare system (88% in Vermont), not abuse. We must address the social and systemic suffering of poverty and economic inequality. As we do this work, we can also bring comfort, coziness, and care into the life of a child in the form of a quilted blanket. Small gestures of care let a child know that they are not alone.

We will use Half-Square Triangles to make our quilts. This is a simple and versatile design that can be put together in patterns. No two quilts will be alike. You can choose to sew one block or many blocks and send them to us. Make as many blocks as you like. If you're really having fun, go ahead and make a whole quilt top! The more the merrier. 108 finished 8-inch blocks make a twin-size quilt - nine columns and twelve rows.

Fabric Choice

In your mind, divide fabrics into light, medium, and dark color value. You can use prints, batik, or solids - choose colors and themes that appeal to you and will have appeal for a young person. Animals, superheroes, nature, and warm, bright colors are all great options. Have some fun! For half-square triangles, **contrast is key**. Use your creativity to choose colors to produce blocks with the greatest visual impact. Always use one light block and one either medium or dark block.

When buying fabric, you can purchase a yard at a time, or you can pick up "fat squares". These are quarter-yard swatches often sold at fabric stores that are usually 18" by 22". A fat square will give you four 9x9 squares with a little left over. You can use the leftover scraps for other projects. You'll be cutting out 9" squares, so think in multiples of nine when calculating how much fabric you need.

Cutting and Sewing

Step 1: Cut two 9" squares. This will make two slightly oversized blocks that can be trimmed to size.

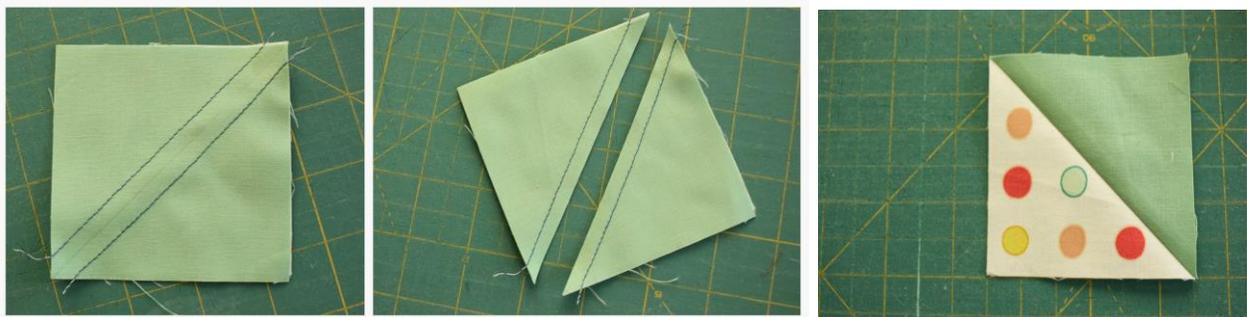
Step 2: Lay the two squares right sides together, facing each other, with the lighter square on top.

Step 3: Draw a diagonal line from one corner to the opposite corner.

Step 4: Then draw two lines 1/4" away on each side of the center line. These will parallel the diagonal line.

Step 5: Sew along those two lines, then cut along the diagonal. You now have two identical blocks!

Step 6: Pressing on the right side of your blocks, press the seam toward the darker fabric.



If you have the tools to do it, you can trim your blocks to 8 ½". If not, it's fine to leave them untrimmed and we will finish up at Bread Loaf Mountain.

If you have made many blocks and can square them up into precise 8 ½" blocks, feel free to sew them together into larger strips.



Please send in your blocks as soon as you are finished with them. We'd like to have all blocks back at Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community by **April 1, 2022**.

Send blocks via US Mail or UPS to:

**Bread Loaf Mountain Monastery
3958 Route 30
Cornwall, VT 05753**

You can choose to make an entire quilt, or you can send in your blocks to be combined with those sent in by others. At Bread Loaf Mountain, we will add the border, batting, backing, and binding. We'll send them off to a long-arm quilter to machine quilt the patchworks with a beautiful design.

Donations Appreciated & Be in Touch!

If you'd like to donate to this project, you can do so in two ways: by purchasing Gift Certificates from Quilters' Corner (phone: (802) 388-3559), or by making a direct donation through our website: www.breadloafmountainzen.org/donate.

If you're planning on sewing and sending in blocks, let Joshin know by e-mail at joshin@breadloafmountainzen.org. And join us on Zoom for a monthly tea & talk, where we'll sew together and chat about the practice of quilting, and the quilting of practice.

Thank you and happy quilting!