

Dear friends,

I'm back from Asia and thought I'd send you my New Year greetings and share news of the past few weeks before settling in to our winter retreat. With the beginning of a new year and a new decade, I wish you much peace, health and contentment for the times ahead. May silence, stillness and wisdom be our guides as we traverse the path of Dhamma to reach ultimate happiness and the unconditioned.

My entire visit was extremely fulfilling in many ways. Meeting Dhamma friends and mentors in Asia, travelling with friends from Canada and teaching retreats in Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia were highly inspiring and uplifting. Observing the commitment, generosity and care of so many people was bearing witness to Dhamma manifesting in daily life. Friends in Asia have been so supportive of our Dhamma Hall project that their generosity has resulted in an advance to the start date. Stay tuned for an update on our website.

My first port of call was Tokyo in response to an invitation from a friend who worked at the Royal Thai Embassy there. Japanese woodworking is in a class of its own and in many ways, quite unparalleled. This old woodworker was in joinery heaven. I was impeccably hosted in the [Rissho Kosekai Temple](#) in Tokyo and was taken to many of the famous sights.





Bangkok was the next stop for the retreat at Pak Chong. The retreat was attended by about fifty people including seven monks from Wat Pah Nanachat. Anoma and family from Ottawa joined in the retreat and after paying respects to LP Sumedho & LP Gunha, we travelled to Ubon to pay homage to LP Chah's memorial. We were blessed with the opportunity to pay respects to LP Liem and LP Anek in Ubon and those visits were truly special.











Meeting Dhamma friends in Singapore, offering thoughts and reflections at the Palelai Temple was very special as I travelled there with Ajahn Pavarovana. Ajahn Pavarovana, who spent the 2018 rains retreat with us at Tisarana, is coming back this year to join our community for an indefinite length of time. We look forward to his company, teachings and woodworking skills.





The final leg of this journey was the retreat at [Sam Poh Temple](#) in Cameron Highlands, Malaysia. A group of about 90 yogis from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Canada and Australia attended this retreat. Sam Poh Temple is an old Chinese Mahayana Temple with a resident Sangha. The combination of our retreat and the practices of their Sangha made for harmonious and powerful expression where the Northern and Southern schools came together to honour the Dhamma in a beautiful way.

