

Abhayagiri Finds a Home at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas 無畏寺住眾在萬佛聖城找到安頓處



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On Monday, October 9, 2017 at 2 am, fourteen monks and twelve laity evacuated Abhayagiri monastery as they saw the blaze and smoke from the raging Redwood Valley Fire. Explosions from propane tanks could be heard in the distance. Internet and phone access was also down making external communication impossible. In the midst of the turmoil, they had to make some difficult decisions without having a complete picture of what was going on.

The group heard that they had to go north on Tomki Road—a rough four-wheel drive road with seven creek crossings and no bridges. They feared that their vehicles would not be able to make the trip; however, they had heard that Tomki Road to the south was engulfed in flames and inaccessible, so they had no choice but to go north with the vehicles they had. After a difficult journey where one of their vehicles had to be left behind, they made it to the evacuation center that had been set up in Willits.

During this time, news of the fire and the possibility of Abhayagiri evacuating had made it to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas around noon. The CTTB Abbot, DM Heng Lyu, concerned for the Abhayagiri community's well-being, extended an invitation welcoming them to come to CTTB. CTTB contacted Luang Por Pasanno who happened to be visiting Temple Forest Monastery in New Hampshire for their Kathina Ceremony. However, since many of the cell phone towers were damaged by the fire, there was no way to contact the Abhayagiri evacuees directly.

2017年10月9日凌晨兩點，14位僧侶及12位居士在紅木山谷熊熊大火和瀰漫的煙霧中撤離無畏寺。可以聽到遠處丙烷儲罐的爆炸聲，互聯網和電話都不通，所以無法和外界通訊。在這個動蕩、沒有整體的資訊的情況下，他們必須做出困難的決定。

他們聽說必須經Tomki路向北，這是一條四輪驅動車行駛的崎嶇道路，有7個沒有橋樑的溪流跨越處。他們擔心他們的車輛無法藉由此道路成功逃出；但是他們也聽說南向道路已被大火吞噬無法行駛，所以只能駕駛現有的車輛向北逃生。經過一段艱辛的旅程（一輛車拋錨無法前行），他們到達了Willits的撤離中心。

中午時分，無畏寺因大火可能撤離的訊息傳到了萬佛聖城，方丈恒律法師掛念無畏寺僧眾居士的安危，邀請他們到萬佛城，並且與正在天普森林寺院（美東新罕布夏州）參加供僧衣節儀式的帕薩諾法師聯絡。只是因為手機塔台火災受損，無法和無畏寺撤離人員直接聯絡。

After some time, Luang Por Pasanno was able to communicate with Ajahn Jotipālo, the senior Abhayagiri monk who was leading the evacuated group. Luang Por Pasanno recommended the group go to CTTB as a refuge from the fire. Given the road conditions, however, the Abhayagiri community could not make it all the way to CTTB that day, so they spent a night at the Three Jewels Dhamma Hall, a small meditation center in Fort Bragg.

On Tuesday at 1pm, the Abhayagiri community drove into CTTB. A total of twenty-five people: eleven bhikshus, three novice monks, two anagarikas, five laymen, and four laywomen. One layman had found accommodations somewhere else. (The Abhayagiri community was joined by two laywomen from the Abhayagiri community who had houses near Abhayagiri monastery. These two laywomen had escaped the fire driving south on Tomki Road through the flames, smoke, and heat to Ukiah.)

The Abbot greeted the Abhayagiri community when they arrived, and there was a palpable sense of joy from everyone. Tired from all the travel, the group was shown to their residences to get some rest: the monks and laymen stayed in Great Compassion House; the laywomen stayed in C-dorm.

The spirit of having the Abhayagiri community at CTTB was like a family reunion. Master Hua had established a Dharma friendship between the Thai Forest tradition and DRBA and had especially praised their strict adherence to the Vinaya. Over the years, this friendship has grown through shared ordinations, ceremonies, and teachings. Yet this was the first time the two communities lived so closely together.

At CTTB, the Abhayagiri monks were respected and supported in their Vinaya and training. In addition to maintaining their own practices, they joined fully in the life at CTTB: attending daily ceremonies, sharing the noon meal, and giving Dhamma talks at IGDVS and DRBU.

Ten or more forest monks attended morning ceremony, meal offering, and evening ceremony almost every day. Luang Por Pasanno, after arriving at CTTB on Wednesday evening following a long flight from the East Coast, attended the 4am morning ceremony the very next day. Curious about the daily CTTB practices, the Abhayagiri monastics asked many questions: Does everyone make Bodhisattva vows? How to bow properly from standing? Why do the CTTB monks rinse out their bowls after lunch and pour it on the ground?

Wanting to minimize the work for CTTB residents, they also asked: “Where do we take out the trash? Not just within the building, but all the way to its final destination so others would not have to do the work. How should we wash the bowls, plates, and utensils? We wish to minimize the setup for the CTTB monastics.”

Even while living as evacuees, the Abhayagiri community scheduled work periods that began with Dhamma reflections. Luang Por Pasanno explained how the Buddha trained his monastic disciples to pay careful attention to the upkeep of their requisites and living area. The sight of

過了一段時間，帕薩諾法師終於和久提帕洛法師（帶領撤離隊伍的資深僧侶）聯絡上，建議他們到萬佛城避難。由於道路情況，當天無法抵達萬佛城，而在三寶法堂，Fort Bragg 的一個小靜坐中心過夜。

星期二下午1點，無畏寺團體開車到達萬佛城，共有25位，包括11位比丘，3位沙彌，2位白衣（受持八戒或十戒的在家人），5位男居士及4位女居士。另1位男居士在別處找到居所。此外還有兩位住在無畏寺附近的女眾，經由南向Tomki路，在火焰煙霧及熱氣中逃離火海到瑜伽市。

方丈親自迎接他們的來臨，大家的歡喜之心溢於言表。旅途勞累的訪客被引領到住處休息。男眾住在大悲院，女眾在法大女生宿舍。

無畏寺團體來到萬佛城的精神就好像家庭重聚。上人在過去建立起泰國森林傳承和法界總會之間的佛法友誼，也特別稱讚他們的嚴守戒律。多年來，經由共同主持的三壇大戒、儀式及教導，友誼不斷增長，但這是第一次兩個團體近距離生活在一起。

萬佛城對無畏寺僧眾的持守戒律和訓練非常尊敬和支持。無畏寺僧眾除了他們本身的日常修行，也參與萬佛城的生活：每天的早晚課、午齋，還在育良小學、培德中學和法界大學說法。

十多位森林僧人幾乎每天參加早晚課及午齋，帕薩諾法師星期三晚上由東岸長途飛行抵達萬佛城，第二天一早就參加早晨四點鐘的早課。無畏寺僧眾對萬佛城每天修行很好奇，提出很多問題：是否每個人都發菩薩願？甚麼是正確的跪拜方式？為何萬佛城僧眾午齋後要用水過碗再洗碗？

希望儘量減輕因他們的住宿而造成萬佛城額外的負擔，他們也詢問了如何處理垃圾？不是棄置在建築物內，而是送到最終的處理中心。以及如何清洗碗盤刀叉等問題？

即使在避難當中，他們的生活仍然以工作出坡做為思維佛法的開端，帕薩諾法師也解釋佛陀如何教導弟子對生活必需品和周遭環境的維護。見到20位僧人居士專注的打掃一對萬佛城住眾、法大職員、學生是很大

twenty monastics and laity mindfully cleaning the Great Compassion House, DRBU Building, and Sudhana Center inspired both CTTB residents and DRBU staff and students. Work clearly was an integral part of their spiritual practice.

Their gatherings were also held in an atmosphere of mutual respect and harmony. People placed their palms together before speaking to seniors, and they listened to each other without interrupting. Mindful and considerate speech was also part of their training.

The Dhamma and Vinaya served as the bedrock for the community's daily life and practice. Despite the possibility that their monastery may have burned, they maintained a constant equanimity. In their Dhamma teachings at CTTB—Luang Por Pasanno in the CTTB Buddha Hall* and Ajahn Siripaño in DRBU—there was the constant theme of taking every moment as an opportunity to practice. Everything is impermanent. It is the nature of fire to burn; having a monastery in a forest means there is always a possibility of a forest fire. There is no use getting angry at the trees or the fire. If the monastery did not burn this time, it would burn at some future time. That's just the way things are: impermanent.

The Abhayagiri community did not embody this reflection on impermanence in a cold and unfeeling way. Rather, they demonstrated an open-hearted sensitivity. Special care was paid to the laity who had lost their homes and possessions. With a gentle and warm sense of support, the monks recited Pali chants of blessings and protection on their behalf. As they chanted, one laywoman's eyes filled with tears. "Tears of joy," she said. "Tears of sadness to tears of joy."

On Tuesday, October 17, the Abhayagiri community returned to Abhayagiri monastery. After the Tuesday noon meal, the entire community paid their respects to the CTTB Abbot, DM Heng Lyu. They expressed their gratitude and appreciation for being able to take refuge at CTTB. DM Heng Lyu responded that they were welcome to stay at CTTB anytime and to consider CTTB their home.

Although the Abhayagiri community only stayed at CTTB for a week, both communities felt they learned a great deal from each other. Ajahn Jotipālo shared in his final words in the Buddha Hall saying that staying at CTTB had been a great experience for the Abhayagiri community. Although they have heard stories from Ajahn Sumedho and Ajahn Amaro about connecting with Master Hua and the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, Ajahn Jotipālo felt that this was a new beginning, a renewal of the relationship between Abhayagiri and CTTB. ❀

* Note: Luang Por Pasanno's Dhamma talk at the CTTB Buddha Hall on October 16 will be published in the next issue of *Vajra Bodhi Sea*.

的激勵。工作，很顯然是他們修行的重要一環。

他們的聚會是在互相尊重、和諧的氛圍裏。對資深者說話前先合掌，也不會打斷彼此的對話。他們的話語也是專注和充滿關懷。

佛陀的教法和戒律，是他們日常生活和修行的磐石。即使寺廟可能被大火焚毀，他們仍然保持沈著穩定。帕薩諾法師在萬佛城的開示，以及思瑞槃諾法師在法大的佛法講座中，都提到每一個時刻都是修行的機會，所有事物都是無常。火焰的本質就是燃燒，位於森林裏的寺廟總是有可能遭遇森林火災，沒有必要對樹林或火焰發怒。如果寺廟這次沒有被燒燬，在將來會遭焚燬。這就是事物的本質—無常。

這個團體對無常的體驗並非冷酷無情，而是敞開心胸的敏銳方式。他們對在火災中損失房舍財物的居士給予特別的關懷，為受災者唱誦巴利祝禱護佑經文。在唱誦時，一位女士眼眶充滿淚水地說道：「悲傷的眼淚，轉換成為歡喜的眼淚。」

10月17日星期二，這個團體返回無畏寺。當天午齋後，團體成員向萬佛城方丈恒律法師表達敬意，感謝萬佛城提供他們避災的住所。律法師則代表萬佛聖城歡迎他們的來訪，也請他們將萬佛聖城當作自己的家。

雖然無畏寺團體在萬佛城僅停留了一個星期，彼此都覺得獲益良多。久提帕洛法師臨行前在大殿致辭，他覺得此次留宿萬佛城是一個非常好的經驗。雖然從阿莫若法師和蘇美度法師那兒，聽到許多關於宣公上人和萬佛城的故事，但是對他而言，現在似乎才是一個新的開始，並且繼續締結更深厚的友誼。❀

備註：帕薩諾法師10月16日在聖城大殿的演講將於下期刊出。