



KARMA THEGSUM CHOLING
Columbus, Ohio

21 March 2016

Dear Dharma Friends:

Thanks to all who have opened their hearts to the Columbus Karma Thegsum Choling since a devastating fire destroyed our center in the early morning hours of Sunday Jan. 31.

We've received cards, letters, donations and many messages of support on social media and elsewhere. Our hearts are full of appreciation for each and every one of you, as each message lets us know that you value Columbus KTC and want to see it continue as a home for the Kagyu dharma of His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa in Central Ohio.

The first weeks were a blur of activity as we tallied up what was lost in the fire: statues, scriptures, paintings, books, equipment, recorded teachings and so much more. Forty years of KTC history went up in flames, forcing us to reflect on what is most important to us – our sangha, our community.

The love we have for the dharma and for each other is what buoyed us up in those early days, and made it possible for us to begin our “nomad’s journey” to find a new home.

Our founder and spiritual guide Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche gave us our charge on that very first Sunday: **“Do not be sad. Rebuild.”** And when we asked him what prayers we should do to benefit the center at this difficult time, he said, **“Rebuild the center. That is the best prayer.”**

So now we enter the next phase of the journey – seeking the right place for our new home.

We've already received clear advice on this matter from Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche. He told us, **“The new building should be larger than the old one.”**

And now, KTC Board members – Director Kim Miracle, Assistant Director Tanya Schroeder, Treasurer Steve Phallen, Secretary Justin Fitch and At-Large Member Eric Weinberg – have taken the first steps toward this goal by seeking input from members and friends about what facilities are needed in our new center.

Next we will analyze the results of the survey and begin to identify options for our members to consider.

But in the meantime, we need to start thinking about how to sustain the new center we obtain.

An affiliate Tibetan Buddhist meditation and study center under the guidance of
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Fortunately, Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche has helped us there, too.

Years ago, when we first started thinking about seeking a larger KTC building, we told Rinpoche we didn't have enough money to buy or build a larger center. "Start looking at your options," he said. "And meanwhile, gather money and members, so that when the options are clear, you will be able to choose among them."

Since then we have undertaken a Membership Drive each autumn to help carry out Rinpoche's advice. And now, with the 2015 Membership Drive still fresh in our minds, we're undertaking another drive – **to give those who want to help us find a new home a chance to support us as continuing supporters, friends, and members.**

Whatever the KTC sangha decides – to build on our current site, buy and build on another site, or buy a building to remodel – money will be needed to support the center on a day-to-day basis.

Our center has operated for the last few years on a "break-even" basis – our donations and event revenues have just matched our expenses, allowing us to protect a small amount in savings for a rainy day.

But when we obtain a new center, we will need to make payments for insurance, for telephone, internet, maintenance, improvements, utilities, (possibly) a mortgage – and we will need to have monthly income we can count on to meet those financial needs.

We will receive many one-time donations in the coming weeks, and those donations will be important. But it will be up to our sustaining donors – the folks who make even a small donation every month – to bring us "home" to a new KTC.

We will need each and every one of our friends to help create the new center. Would you consider a small monthly donation to make the new center a reality?

We have three categories for monthly donors: supporters, friends, and members.

KTC Supporters are just beginning to take on a continuing monthly commitment to the center. They have modest means, but want to make a dedicated monthly contribution. In return, they receive our appreciation and great merit from their gift.

KTC Friends give at a slightly higher level. In return for their gift, they receive our appreciation, great merit and a small discount on KTC programs.

KTC Members take on a larger monthly commitment, and also must have taken the Buddhist Vow of Refuge (or intend to do so at their earliest opportunity). A portion of their membership pledge is contributed to our "home" monastery, Karma Triyana Dharmachakra, so they are considered members of both organizations.

As core contributors and members of the KTC, KTC Members may vote for and run for our administrative board positions, and are invited to participate in major decisions for the community.

There are two categories of membership: Sustaining Members and Benefactor Members. Each provides important support for the organization.

Although the amounts for Supporter, Friend, and Member categories reflect minimum contributions, we would like to encourage you to consider giving more than the minimum amount.

And if you currently are a supporter, friend, or member, please consider increasing your monthly pledge.

At this important time, \$5 more or \$10 more or \$20 more or even \$50 more per month can make a major difference as we seek to re-manifest our center and bring the congregation “home” again. Please consider giving more each month – your generosity is appreciated!

The donor drive will continue through April 24, 2016.

At the end of the drive, we will offer a drawing among all KTC monthly donors for a beautiful consecrated statue of Chenrezig.

So while our center is at a crossroads, we have strong and clear advice from our founder and spiritual guide: Manifest a new center; make it larger than the old one; and gather money and members to sustain it.

Will you join us in making this new center a reality?

Best Wishes in the Dharma,

Kim Miracle, Tanya Schroeder, Justin Fitch, Eric Weinberg, Steve Phallen, and Lama Kathy Wesley