

## **Buddhist Peace and Conflict Chaplaincy Information Session**

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Yeah, a very warm welcome to all of you. There's so many of you that I actually can't see all of you in one screen. So I'm just going to the second screen as well to say hello. We are very happy and excited that you are all here for this information session on the Pax program. This attempt of bringing together the fields of the *Buddha-dharma*, conflict transformation, peace building and chaplaincy. And I'm very excited to be entering this journey and exploring the potential really that can come out of bringing these fields together in this time that we are all in at the moment, which is really characterized by so much separation and division.

So, yeah, just wanting to express my appreciation to all of you. And today, this is really about you bringing in your questions about this program and hopefully us being able to respond to these questions and bring some clarity. And before we do that, before we open the space to your questions, I want to do two things. I want to inform you about a change in the program that was really only confirmed very recently and that Gil and I are really happy and excited about him, who on my screen is sitting to my left. Kim will be joining our team. So there will be the three of us as core faculty holding the PUCs training.

And Kim, if you'd like to say hello to everyone and maybe just introduce yourself as part of the team, I'd really appreciate that and so excited that you can be with us. Sure. Thank you, Kirsten. And I'm really thrilled to be able to do this, to join this team. It's a wonderful honor. And I'm excited to be part of this journey of creating this new program and to hopefully work with many of you on a journey around exploring peace and conflict transformation in a context of Buddhist teachings and practice and just a little bit about my, uh, my background.

So I'm, I've been a community organizer, a faith-based community organizer and organization builder for social justice for more than 30 years in the Bay Area. And, um, have been involved in the dance of inner and outer work for all that time. So in community organizing, we have the principle that the first revolution is internal, but often doing the work of organizing and movement building and social justice, it tends to be externally oriented and anger driven and focused on policy change or, you know, change out in the world. And so the inner work sometimes is neglected or there aren't the tools and practices to understand how that is true, that the inner, that the first revolution is internal.

And so about 12 or 14 years ago, I really stepped back from that and took refuge in the *Buddha-dharma-saṅgha* and started my own journey of chaplaincy with Gil and the Sati Center. And that brought me to what I do now, which is I'm the director, the executive director of a restorative justice program in California state prisons called Guiding Rage into Power. And we work with people who are incarcerated for life sentences or long-term sentences for having committed serious and violent crimes. And they are, I facilitate with them, sit in circle in my case, it's down at Soledad with men who are really hungry to learn how to heal the horrific childhoods and lives that they had and to understand what led them to flash out and take on lifestyles that caused to people they loved and their families and to strangers or to gangs or to whatever it was.

And they do really deep, courageous, vulnerable work to learn to become emotionally intelligent and accountable for their lives, fully accountable for their lives. And through that they, I see before my eyes, people become free, like truly liberated human beings who can, even though they are incarcerated, they can, they can become what we call peacemakers and they start to be of service and, and, created back to create a peaceful environment on their prison yard and in their families and then when they get released. And so part of what, you know, and Gil has been a longtime supporter of Grip and in fact introduced me to Grip 12 or 14 years ago. And so part of what I'm excited about is how to be bringing some of the the dharma from within prison, from what we've learned inside prison doing this work in most extreme cases, what's the guiding rage into power for all of us or the ways to be explored?

So I wonder, Kim cut out a few times for me. Did she cut out for you too? I was wondering, yeah. So Kim, thank you for that. That was wonderful. It was so wonderful that parts of it we couldn't hear. Maybe the connection was so good. But at least from my point of view, it didn't matter. It came through so beautifully, your passion, your interest, and what you're doing with grip. And so, so anyway, so just know that we didn't quite hear all of it, but we heard enough. So thank you.

And so I'm very excited to have Kim on board and have been looking for ways to get Kim's wonderful work, the work of Grip, out into our society more widely. Right. And to have this integrated now into our work in this program here, I think it's going to be a really richer program and more dynamic and having a three of us together as friends and as sharing both the same Buddhist tradition, having so much that we can work with each other. And we're kind of prepared for this time. So I'm very exciting.

So just a few words maybe to introduce or contextualize all this. I've been interested in this topic of peace and especially non-violent ways of working towards peace for over 50 years. It's been a huge interest through my life. And now after being a Buddhist teacher for 35 years and I've been involved in all kinds of conflict mediation as a Buddhist teacher at different settings, supporting different Buddhist communities with setting up conflict resolution processes and committees. And then having done this now over 20 years of chaplaincy work. And I feel like now I have something really valuable that I want to bring into this work of peace and conflict work.

And the more I've kind of thought about it, the more inspired I am that we're capable in this program to introduce something into this field of peace and conflict work, which is very uncommon in my experience. And that is certainly the level of personal practice that Buddhism calls on as preparation and as a support for it is, you know, is often lacking in people who do wonderfully peace work. But for the deeper kind of work, especially the kind of work of working towards peace and nonviolence, I think it really requires an inner transformation, an inner practice that's really strong. And so we want to bring this to the program in a very strong way so that that's really there to support this kind of work.

And the second is chaplaincy, that chaplaincy, it's a very unusual, in the United States at least, it's a very unusual role. Many people don't quite know what it is. Some people are a little bit intimidated by the word chaplaincy because it has such a strong, maybe Christian association. But I thought a lot about changing it, but I'm still content with it because I think that in enough circles, the idea of a chaplain is someone who cares for the heart of all people's concerns. A chaplain is a little bit more, at least in our circles, a chaplain is an interfaith chaplain that's available to care for the spiritual life, the heart life, the inner life of anybody and everyone they encounter.

And so rather than being first and foremost a mediator, for example, of conflict, they're first and foremost someone who clearly has the best interests of everyone in a conflict on their hearts and mind. That everyone in a conflict is willing to talk to the chaplain because clearly the chaplain, I don't know if not taking sides as the right language, but the chaplain has

a whole different orientation to what is happening in the situation than the conflict itself. There's something more important going on. There's the deeper humanity of all this. And so to bring chaplaincy into the world of peace and conflict, I think is a relatively unique opportunity that hasn't really been developed a lot.

So if I'm right about this, then I see this as kind of beginning to shape a new field, which, which then you're going to help pioneer with us. And so to some degree, we've spent, Kirsten and I have spent since last summer time with thinking about the curriculum, making plans for what it could be this program. But we have a whole curriculum, you know, what we're going to do all these months that's laid out. It's possible we'll do none of it. We're discovering how to do this as we go along, and the things we don't know, the important pieces we don't know that goes into, contribute to building it and creating it, is who is it the people that are signing up?

And so understanding who comes and their backgrounds, their skill level, what their needs are is part of it. We also don't know what's going to happen in the world during this program. And we might have to or be responsive to what's happening in the world with what we're doing. And so that also might shape what we do in any, you know, any given module. And also we don't know how it's going to develop over time. And so as we go along, we'll be looking back at our curriculum that we have, and also shaping it as we go along as well, based on how we're all growing, we're all developing and coming together as a community.

So you're stepping into something that's going to be discovered in the process of doing it. If that's not what you like, if you want to have 100% clarity that we know exactly what we're doing, and we've done this many, many times before, then, you know, this is then not the program for you. But I'm very excited and very enthusiastic to do this program. And I kind of see it as a, for me personally, a culmination of my interests and passions and engagements with my life for the last 50 years, not more. And so, you know, this is something that I'm very inspired by. Do you want to say some more?

Yeah. Thank you, Gil. And you can see we're already practicing how to improvise. Well, you put everything so beautifully and I'm, yeah, I'm inspired. Maybe just to add my excitement about this program as well, because I've really only ever seen those fields taught in separation. You know, I've taught so many trainings on conflict transformation and conflict mediation and nonviolence without having the mandate to go into awareness practices and bringing in this inner journey of holding the pain of conflict or just the high level reactivity of conflict. And so much potential is lost.

Or the other way around, we practice inner peace on the cushion. But do we also have the

skills to dive into the messiness of a conflict dynamic or the stamina and heart resilience to engage in this world? That's so confusing and confused at this time. So, I see a lot of untapped potential in bringing those together. And I'm really excited to, yeah, be starting this journey together with Gil and Kim and whoever else who is in the room here and who will be part of that with you. So, Kim, do you want to add anything before we take questions?

I think I want to name that some of you, you know, may have noticed that while our teaching team is has a range of, you know, we're different human beings and we're situated differently on, you know, two continents. Kirsten is in Europe. Gil and I are here in the Bay Area. We have women and men and but that ethnically we are three white people who are teaching this and we want to just name that we know that. And it's not something that we are oblivious to, where in fact, the way I'm holding this is that part of, you know, part of what we want to be exploring is how to do this work around peace and conflict transformation from whatever identity we are bringing to the to the work and to be able to be conscious and aware of that and not not and also the historical context and history of conflict and pain that we may be stepping into and understand and bring that kind of humility and curiosity to understand with greater depth.

Whether it's the racial dynamics or the colonial dynamics or the class dynamics or the whatever the history is, the gender, the sexual dynamics that may be presenting themselves in this moment. And so I wanted to just speak to that as part of what I'm excited about and I think is important for us to be looking at as well and supporting folks to be on their own, um, in their own curiosity around too. Thank you very much, Kim.

So let's open it up. Let's hear from from some of you any questions that you'd like to ask and hopefully we have some answers. Yeah, I see, uh, Shami. Hi. Hello. Yeah. Can you hear me? Okay, great. Yeah. Um, yeah, I know that, um, some of us have been in some of the other chaplaincy programs, and I'm curious about what sort of overlap there may or may not be with those programs. Thank you.

Thank you for that question, and maybe that's one for you to answer, Gil. I haven't been in any of the other programs. I don't know if you have, Kim. Yeah, Kim did the regular chaplaincy program, and I've been the faculty of both of them. And I think that it's a very welcome idea that someone who's been in our chaplaincy programs before will do this one. I think they're a great foundation to already come in with this orientation towards Buddhist chaplaincy.

And because chaplaincy work and the skills and orientation of chaplains are so huge. It's like all of life, kind of, I think. And so it's like, you know, you don't say, you don't do breath meditation and follow three breaths and say, you know, I've done it. You know, I don't need

it anymore. I finished it after three breaths. It's a lifetime. I've been doing my breath now for over 50 years and I'm still learning how to do it. So in that way, chaplaincy is something you're always learning and developing going further.

And in some sense, I think this current one that we're doing, the peace and conflict chaplaincy probably will have even a stronger focus on the inner life of the chaplain or the people going through it than the other chaplaincy programs we have, because it's going to be even more important to really get the inner life well established to be able to be in the middle of sometimes very intense conflict and be able to hold your peace even in there. Thank you, Bill.

Other questions? And you can either raise your physical hands or your digital hand. There's Cynthia. Yeah, yeah. You'd be really interested to have a sense from you three of the types of projects that those who participate in the program might undertake. I mean, just when you think about what's going on in the world, and I've, you know, had the pleasure of learning about the GRIP program recently, it's really important focus on violence and transforming, you know, religion to peace. And then there's everything that's going on in the streets. Um, so I was just curious whether you have thoughts about the range of types of projects that people might undertake.

All of us would like to start responding to this one. If you have things to say, Kirsten, please. I could dive in briefly. We've had a number of conversations about this peace project, or however we want to call it, because that feels like such an integral part of this program to really kind of find one's own seat in the, I want to say outer creation of peace, though that feels like that sounds so big. To me, the peace project can take on a number of different forms and faces and manifestations just as varied as peace really manifests in the world.

And I see it as an interplay of, well, a need that's in the world or in a community or in a relationship or in an organization, and your own hearts calling, aspiration, and skillset you want to bring forth. Yeah. When I was still involved in the peace movement in Germany, there was one peace project that my colleagues and I often spoke about, which was just this temporary restaurant that would cook up different recipes from around the world and then invite people from different backgrounds just to have a conversation together. That too is the creation of peace.

So to be really open-minded and open-hearted about that and to also think of the program as an exploration. Well, what is peace to me and what is my way of bringing it to the world and who are my people? What is my context? That would be my response. Yeah, Bill or Kim, if there's anything that you'd like to add. Yeah, I think it has to be very personal, and there's

a wide range of things that it could be. I've chosen not to be too ambitious or not come with clear ideas of what I want people to do, because I want people to find their own something.

And so it could be anywhere. It could be just helping with neighborhood conflicts. It could be being a chaplain, have a little sign table, you're a chaplain, just on a side street in Minneapolis. And whoever comes by, who knows who's going to come by and see that? Who are you? And what are you doing here? It could be that you have the solution to world peace and you'll do your project and it'll be world peace at the end, so everything in between.

So I, I, I didn't really add anything to what Kirsten said but I accept as I emphasizing that I'd like it to be personal and, and, uh, and it's the same thing with the eco chaplaincy program there too people do a project at the end and, um, and so you'll be in discussion with the faculty and some with your cohort also about your project and your ideas of it. And so it can be co-developed. There are other questions, comments from anybody. Yeah, Candice, see your hand. Yeah. Yeah, thank you for this. I appreciate this time to learn more about the program, and I'm very drawn to it and very intrigued by it.

My concern is I've just finished the eco-chaplaincy program recently, and we are diving into a much larger manifestation of that. And so my concern is time to jump into the next program right away where it feels like there's so much yet to do with our collaboration with other cohorts. So is there an opportunity at all to be able to have access to some of the materials or some of the program? And I know this isn't ideal by any sense of the word, but I'm just wondering if there's a way that we could have a taste of some of the program, but yet not cut ourselves short with our current work, with our, what I'm involved in currently with the eco-chaplaincy.

Yeah, probably this is most relevant for me to respond to. And I think that having finished the eco-chaplaincy, I think that you're in the formative stage of really growing into it. And so spending more time with that right now, and maybe the second time we do this program, Marcy, you might be ready for this one and not kind of spread yourself thin that way. And if you can get some of the material, I don't know about that. I mean, how easy it is, how we can make that more generally available as resources for people. It's a good question.

We are trying to have a regular speaker series that is a piece in Chaplaincy Speaker Series that I interviewed Mosen Wadani Dawi recently and Kirsten did a wonderful interview with Michael Nagler. And I'm planning to do one relatively soon. I'm hoping with a person I haven't asked yet. I thought it would be nice to do it with Kim. And she has a wonderful background and I want to, you know, learn about it more. And also it might be nice as she starts this program that all of you have a chance to get to know her more. And maybe someday I could

also do it Kirsten.

And so anyway, we invite different people to come in to come and speak. And that might be the indirect way that benefit from this program. Yeah, thank you, Gail. Wisdom. A lot of wisdom there. So I appreciate that. Thank you, Candice. I see a good stuff. Heather, you have your hand up. Thank you. Curious about the Peace Project? Something that came to mind was in some programs I've been involved in. There was a very specific, the Peace Project, whatever the project of the training is. Yeah. Can't be something you were already involved in or that was already beginning before you began the training. Is that, how does that idea land?

Well, it's okay for me to say something. Please. Okay. So my personal orientation around teaching these kinds of programs is something that for better or worse is maybe summarized or represented by the idea of what's called adult learning, that adult learning means that you're motivated to learn. You're learning for your own sake and studying on your own and taking responsibility for your education. And so ideally, the project is something that develops the skills, the orientation, that grows your capacity to be a Buddhist peace and conflict chaplain.

And so if it's something you're already doing and you really want to pour yourself into it and grow and you feel this is the place you're going to grow in this capacity, why do anything else if you're an adult learner there? I mean, why, why, why, you know, that's, that's where it's, that's where you're growing. That's where you're developing. I see Nuala. What are you? I am. I only just heard about this. So it might be that I haven't read the information properly. I was wondering, is this something that is just US-based or is it worldwide? I'm in Ireland and I'm wondering, is this something I could do?

I can respond to that. So it's a mixture of online modules and we'll make sure, since I'm based in Europe as well, that the time frames for these online days will at least not go into the middle of the night, though they might run a bit late to make sure that the East Coast and the West Coast time zones are included in the US as well. But there are two residential retreats in California planned as part of this program. Yeah. I had seen that. I guess I just wanted to make sure I was allowed to apply. I didn't know if the focus was purely on the need of people in the state. So that's really nice to hear that it sounds like it's possible.

Yes, okay, now I understand your question more fully. Yes, absolutely. Yeah. Oh, wonderful. And it's also really helpful to have the logistical information as well. So thank you very much, Kirsten. Thank you, Nuala. Thank you. The biggest challenge probably is coming to the retreats. It'd be ideal if we can do those in person. And the location we're doing it is probably

not so wonderful, so perfect for doing kind of a remote participation in it. And maybe it'll be recorded and it can be done remotely that way. But ideally, you'd be able to come here and be part of it.

And maybe just to speak to Nuala, what you're saying too is that absolutely this is to have people who are not in the United States could really be beneficial to the learning and the community of all of us. Because we can sometimes in the U.S. get a little bit narrowly focused on what's happening in our political context and sort of, you know, our, you know, be a little bit too narrow. And so to be, you know, like Kirsten's bringing a lot of that experience and, you know, understanding of global conflict and peace movements. And so to be able to have folks that are engaging in these kinds of, in this kind of work from different parts of the world, I think would be wonderful.

Thanks, Kim. And thanks, Gil, as well. I would love to come in person. So this is great. Thank you. I see Tamira, if I pronounce your name correctly. Hi, Kirsten. It's Tamira. Tamira. Yeah. Good to be with everyone. Yeah, this topic feels so important and so timely. And if this is something I am going to do, I want to make sure that I can fit it into my life and give it my wholehearted attention. So I'm just curious if you have a sense. And this falls into the adult learning category at some level. But that is kind of how much time commitment will be involved. Yeah.

Hmm, really appreciate that question. And that's actually one question that we connected about because we all feel that this is really important. And Kim and Gil, if it's okay, I can get started and you two can add if you like. Yes. Hmm. For us, it's really important that if you participate in this program, then to bring the motivation and the energy and capacity to be engaged and committed. If we were to put a number onto it, we thought maybe it could be something like three hours a week of engagement in between the modules that are part of the the structure already.

And then, of course, you know, there will be a possibility to deepen into it and to give this more space as we go. We're envisioning, for example, core, I don't know if that's the right word to use, homework or assignments in between the modules and then also optional material to work through and also interaction with buddies, so others in the program and connecting in this way. Maybe that's to start with Kim and Gil, anything to add to that?

I was kind of building on what Kirsten said, that we are looking for people who are very motivated and have time for this because, you know, it's a big deal for the three of us to offer this. And we're inspired to do it. And so we really want to have some of the other people who really want to give themselves to it. So if it's just, you know, if you don't really have the time, then,

you know, it's not really the program for you. And probably the primary reason people have dropped out of some of our chaplaincy programs in the past was they were surprised how much time it took. And so we want to make sure that you understand that ahead of time.

So this average of three hours a week, maybe, in addition to the in-class programs, depends a little bit on your learning style and how you study and how quickly you can read and different, all kinds of things. It also depends on, and part of it, we want to engage in times in between our modules with each other, in small groups or in buddies, because chaplaincy and all of this has to do with skill building and in self-awareness. And so we want to give you opportunities to be each other's chaplain, to be each other's peacemaker and engage in a way that's very personal at the same time as building a skill. And yeah.

It's a very multifaceted thing where we're going to be operating educationally in many different ways at the same time, personally, interpersonally, you know, and so forth. So we have, yeah, we have three folks with hands. I think Valerie and then Chris and then Scott. Hi, yeah, thank you for this information. I really appreciate hearing a little bit that you've shared, especially you, Kim, I think we got a little of your background. And I'm curious to just hear more, like, what are the, I'm hearing like *Buddha-dharma* and I'm hearing chaplaincy, but like, what are the schools of thought and teachers and sort of like readings and places that will be, that this program is like rooted in or pulling from to get a little more sense of a flavor of the, yeah, of how we'll be diving in. Thanks.

Who would like to get started on that one, our curriculum that we've developed and might not use or started to develop? Yeah. Yeah, I don't know about a school of particular thought about peace work or conflict resolution work. The, there's conflict skills that come from non-violent communication that Kirsten has been deeply involved in, so some of that will come out. I'm very fond of the kind of work of nonviolent action that Gene Sharp first wrote about. And that I read about almost 50 years ago, he was kind of the pioneer of studying the academic study of nonviolent action and all the different ways that that works.

And that's just a piece of it. I just, I have a big interest in that. And so I don't know if I can have a satisfying answer for you. You're a very good question. I appreciate you responding, girl, because I don't either. I mean, there's a number of traditions, or not so much actually traditions, more approaches that I have been trained within around conflict mediation, for example, nonviolent action. But we haven't, I think, because we're also pulling those fields together and seeing where they overlap and what happens when they come together. I don't feel we've sort of situated the program in this way, if that makes sense. Yeah.

Yeah, thank you. I don't know if I'm looking for some ideological, like specific, but just, yeah,

interested to hear about maybe about y'all's backgrounds and things too and what's informing you as you move. But thank you. One of the, I mean, maybe one of the exciting aspects that are things that maybe it responds to your question is that we have Kim involved now. That Kim's guiding rage into power, the program that she teaches in, facilitates, supports, is a phenomenal practice and orientation in its own right. And part of one of the reasons to bring Kim along is because we want to take some of those learnings and processes of that they've developed in GRIP and try to develop them for people who are not in prison.

And I've had conversations with Kim about this before and been encouraging her to develop a program for the general public. And she's been kind of working towards that. And a little bit, I'm hoping that having her involved in this program will give her a chance to kind of begin exploring how to adapt what she's doing in the prisons to all of us in a way. And so that is a kind of a school of thought in a sense to answer your question, Valerie. And I probably said more about my wishes around this with Kim than she was prepared to hear. And so this is a part of our all finding our way.

I'm learning all kinds of things that Gil has in mind for me. It's all good. Chris. Yeah, thank you all. Your last few answers have started to get into this a bit, but I'm just curious what a given session meeting might look like. I'm assuming there's readings we'll talk about. Also wondering if there's more, um, hands-on or relational or applied, uh, activities or practices will be, will be doing, um, and I guess similarly about the, the retreats, are they fully silent, um, meditation retreats like we're familiar with or they can have a different flavor?

Oh yeah, thanks for that question. Maybe I can get started in the modules and then, um, Gil, you can continue and maybe you as well, Kim. All of the above, really. I think the way we're envisioning this is to have a hopefully fruitful and helpful mix of approaches which because all of these fields require such a diversity of approaches. So there will be very classical meditation practice, but also self-reflection. There will be relational aspects. Hopefully we get to actually work with conflict scenarios as well that some of the participants are bringing in or whatever happens in the larger political realm.

So that's one of the things that I'm really excited about to have that mixture of approach. That will be the short response to your question from me, Gill and Kim, anything to add? Yeah, I think what I don't want, what I'm not interested in having is a lot of didactic sessions where the teachers are just sitting here lecturing you about how, you know, all kinds of important things. It's, we'll have some things to teach and to do, but I mostly see that in small pieces, the readings, the ahead of time, that's more like the didactic part. And that when we come together, it has much more experiential and personal and looking at oneself and

understanding this for oneself.

And so that's how it's been historically in this program, especially in I think the eco-chaplaincy, even more so, that that way. And those of you have done it, hopefully you concur with me. That's what happens. And for the retreats, it depends a little bit who's coming to the, you know, what we decide, how to shape the retreats. But the overall vision we have is to emphasize the Buddhist side, the Buddhist practice side at the beginning as a foundation. And one of the reasons we had this, the first retreat within a few months of beginning, is how important it is to really go a deep dive into the practice and the meditation and the silence.

And how much of that will do at that first week is not completely, you know, that has to be seen. I doubt it'll be 100% silent retreats, but I think we'll certainly have a good number of days are silent. There might be more teaching than a regular silent retreat because we really want to make sure that you really personalize some of the skills of meditation and practice in a way that maybe would be different than an asylum retreat. But so the first one, I think, looks more like, hopefully look more like a retreat than the second one. The second one, you know, depending on how it unfolds. But I imagine the second one will focus more on other skills in this area.

Great. Thank you. Thank you. We have Scott next. Thank you. Hi, everybody. Thank you guys so much for offering this platform for us to ask these questions. So I don't have a background in service. I've been practicing for a number of years. And, you know, my practices led me to ask, you know, what is an appropriate response to the conditions as they arise? And in my life now, it is to figure out how to help, how to be of service and relieve suffering. And there's unfortunately so many opportunities to do that.

But I'm at the stages of exploring what exactly that means. And, you know, of course, the Sadi Center has all these wonderful chaplaincy programs. But I get, I got confused a little bit about the way the programs are offered. And so my initial focus that I want to continue is to investigate hospice work but I'm also involved with some local groups that do, you know, some, you know, small scale protests and stuff. We know what the political climate is and there's room for exactly what you're talking about now in that space.

So all these chaplaincy programs seem to really overlap a lot. I guess I'm trying to ask, like, is this an appropriate program for somebody who doesn't have any background in service work at all, but who's been practicing pretty intently for a number of years, you know, 15, 20 years, no, including study, or would you recommend something else? Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you, Scott, for your question. Yeah. Yeah. Gil, would you like to respond to

that?

Yes, since I've been involved with these different programs, I think that if you only were going to do interest in hospice, then the regular year-long chaplaincy program is probably the better fit. It's more hospital-centric, in a sense, hospice-centric. But the skills of a chaplain are the basic skills of chaplaincy, of being a chaplain is the same no matter where the chaplain goes. So learning the skill of listening deeply, learning the skills of wonderful chaplaincy slogan kind of is being an empty presence that welcomes the stranger. So to really be able to be there in a heartfelt, full way to be present for someone else and have the skills to listen, to ask good questions, to care for, that's kind of the skills that are being learned all the time and in all the chaplaincy programs.

So, you know, where you're best suited for, I can't tell you, but if you're, if you're more interested in the kind of the peace and conflict kind of area, you'll learn chapters of skills there that you can bring to hospice. And one of the program is the year-long program. I'm not clear on the timing of these as well. So is it possible to lay out a sketch of the timing or not? Yeah. This program starts in June and goes for a year and a half, ends, I think in December, the following year. The regular chaplaincy is 11 months, and that starts every year in September and ends at the beginning of July. And the eco-chaplaincy begins in August and ends, I think, in January, I guess, two years later.

So, you know, it's 18 months as well, because it starts in August. This year starts in 2026 in August, and so end in January 2028. Okay. Thank you, guys. Thank you, Scott. We're almost at the end of our time, and I see you, Augusta. Yeah. I wonder if I'm confused or misheard or misread. I heard Gil just say that this program PACS begins in June. I thought I read that it began in January. Is it 24 months? Or can you clarify that again for me? Thank you.

It's one and a half years. It starts in June, and I will put the link to the website in the chat in one moment. On the website, it says begins January 1, 2026. Oh, that's the application period. Thank you. I see why I'm confused. Thank you so much. Glad we could clarify that. Thank you.

Okay. I wonder how to wrap up. Kim and Gil. Oh, we have one more question. Maybe we can take one more question before we close. Peter, hello. Yeah, I just wanted to thank you guys for having the courage to create something new and go into the unknown. And obviously, we know it's just so needed right now and your openness to just go for it. So that's what I wanted to say. And not know what's going to happen. Be open to developing. It's very exciting that you've, you know, what to do.

I think everybody in this group all want to do something. And that's the, and many of us are very experienced in, I'm a chaplain or I was a chaplain, a retired chaplain and taking nonviolent communication. The question is like, what do I do? How can I help? And that's the hardest part. And you guys have created, or are trying to create something that addresses that question, which is really the hardest. How do we do this? How do we make things better in this world right now? So thanks for the courage for doing that.

Thank you so much for your sharing, Peter. That's actually a wonderful way of closing this information session. And just want to say from my side, I think one of the things you said really just resonates with me so deeply and is something that we've spoken about to really ask questions and to grapple together with the times we're in and with the challenges we're in. That's something that, yeah, I'm really looking forward to. And I also have, you know, some, I think, healthy respect of the challenge of that task. And I feel this is what's needed right now. So appreciate your words.

And yeah, I just want to see if there's anything else that Bill or Kim wants to speak to. Oh, I have one last thing from my side, two things. One, thank you all for being here. I'm inspired by this program, and it's very gratifying or meaningful to have your interest, so thank you. And the second thing is that partly because Kim has joined fairly late and there's a lot of momentum between Kirsten and I behind all this. I want to help Kirsten, Kim, feel completely 100% part of this. I wonder if you could be willing to stop to say the final words.

Yes, of course. I am just thrilled to see so many people interested. I kind of wondered, is anybody going to show up today? So really great to see the interest. I'm more excited than ever about just who this cohort is going to be and how we're going to create something together. Because I think the questions that are being raised are ones we have as well. So looking forward to seeing some of your applications and thank you for coming. And I assume if there are other questions that you have, that there's a email that you can send to and we will get them and get back to you. So thank you.

Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. Take good care.