

AGM DEC 2020 – Welcome Address by Spiritual Director – Ayya Jitindriya

Welcome to Santi's AGM everybody.

I'd like to make a special welcome and also introduce you to Ajahn Hasapanna, the abbot of Dhammasara Nuns' Monastery in Western Australia, who has come over at this time to join us for the AGM and spend a few days with us at Santi. We have plans for some of the Dhammasara nuns to come to Santi soon, for some to stay a while and for some to take up residence and help grow the Bhikkhuni community here.

Well, 2020 has been a crazy and powerful year!

Bushfires, floods, gale force winds, extreme weather conditions, and the global covid pandemic with dramatic lockdowns and new lifestyle regulations.

But I'm glad to see you all here and trust that you have all fared well through this time, despite its many challenges.

At the monastery, despite several closures for periods of time, we have also fared well, thanks to our kind and generous supporters. It's been a quiet time in general here, but that in itself is supportive for our contemplative practice. For most Buddhist monastics everywhere 'lockdown' is the lifestyle of choice anyway!

Yet, we've had our hands full at times too, with post-bushfire clean-up work and other commitments in keeping the monastery functioning, and keeping our supporters updated through the website with all the changes and adaptations we've had to make through the year.

We seem to be getting back to some semblance of day-to-day normality though, albeit on-guard somewhat with the ever-present possibility of rising covid transmission. But for the most part, we can be truly grateful for being here in Australia during these times, as we have fared extremely well with regard to the pandemic chaos that has struck the world at large.

Before passing over to the main reports today, I just want to say thank you to everyone for coming, and thank you to all the Santi committee for being part of our community in this way and helping to support the nuns' monastery into the future.