

Theme for Summer Ango 2026

Shuso – Chozetsu (Speaking Well)
Alfred Chozetsu Baehrenz Thordarson



TRUST IN MIND

*The poem “Xinxin Ming (Inscribed On the Believing Mind)”
by Jianzhi Sengcan, the Third Ancestor*

With Trust in Mind as the theme for the Summer Ango, we are not pointing to belief in an idea or in ourselves, as we normally may understand it. This is the title of the poem Xinxin Ming (jp. Shin jin mei) which refers to something closer, to the mind's own faith in itself - the quiet certainty that our original nature is already whole and needs nothing added to it. The Third Ancestor, Jianzhi Sengcan (jp. Kanchi Sōsan), wrote it as an inscription, uncompromising lines meant to be carried in the body rather than merely understood. The poem starts by cutting straight to the heart of the matter:

*The Perfect Way knows no difficulties
Except that it refuses to make preference:
Only when freed from hate and love,
It reveals itself fully and without disguise.
A tenth of an inch's difference,
And heaven and earth are set apart.*

The trust talked about is the willingness to put down our endless picking and choosing and simply let the Way reveal itself without us interfering. This is not passive resignation but the most active thing we can do: stop creating the difficulties that only a hairsbreadth of preference makes. During the angō we will lean in and trust together - trust in zazen, in samu, oryōki, and one another - discovering that the believing mind and the mind that is believed in were never two. To trust the mind is simply to come home to what has always been here, calm and large-minded, wanting nothing and refusing nothing.