



THE DRUUMM BEAT

DIVERSE & REVOLUTIONARY UU MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

AUGUST 2020

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 13

ENTER AND REJOICE

We invite BIPOC Unitarian Universalists to participate in our Fall 2020 DRUUMM Regional (virtual) BIPOC Caucuses. These will be held via Zoom on Saturday mornings in September. As we face a world on fire and the dehumanizing impact of racism, we need one another more than ever for our own healing and liberation. We are organizing these member-led BIPOC spaces with the intention of deepening our connections with one another, being present to one another's stories and truth, and fostering systems of care. Meet other BIPOC UUs from congregations in your area, experience our faith in new ways, and together help us build a more beloved community. This is our sacred work that makes space for the spirit and shapes our UU faith.

- South - Sept 12th 10am to 1pm ET Facilitators: Christian Harden & Noel Burke
- Midwest - Sept 12th 9am to 12pm CT Facilitators: Oshara Meesha & Parnee Frederick
- New England - Sept 19th 10am to 1pm ET Facilitators: Nina Lytton & Rayla Mattson
- Southwest/Mountain - Sept 19th 9am to Noon MT Facilitators: Jen Simon & Mateo Frisk
- Pacific NW - Sept 19th 9am to Noon PT Facilitators: Lia Nagase & Kara Laverde
- California - Sept 26th 10am to 1pm PT Facilitator: Linda Russell
- Central East - September 26th 11am to 1pm ET Co-Facilitators: Hope Johnson & Paula Cole Jones

Pre-registration is required, and more details will be available after August 15th. For more information please contact Dawn Robinson at drobinson@uua.org.

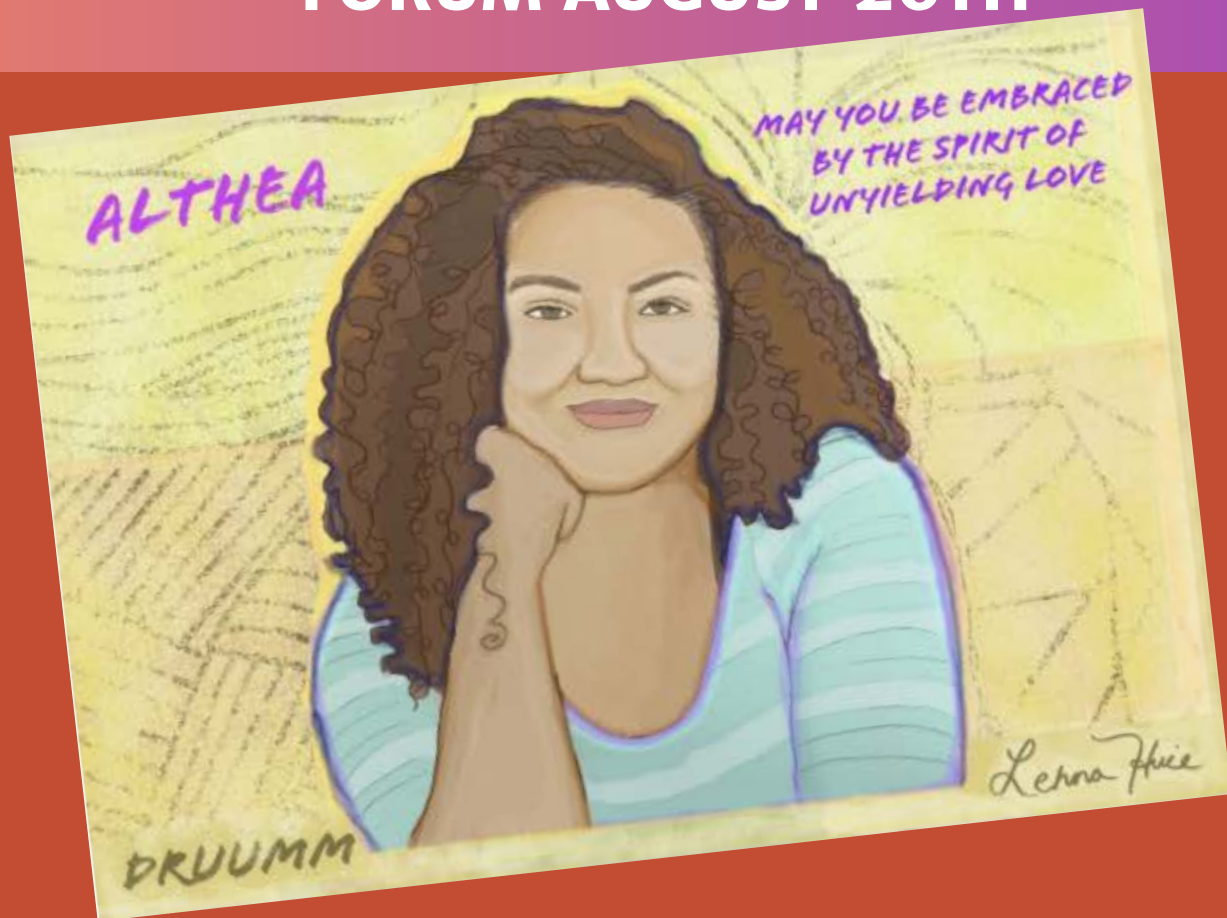
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They think pro black movements are anti white because pro white movements have always been anti-black.

- Damany Iqwe

MENDING THREADS: OUR UU RESPONSE TO HATE VIOLENCE FORUM AUGUST 26TH



Mending Threads: Our UU Response to Hate Violence A BIPOC only forum featuring
Althea Bernstein Wednesday August 26th, 2020 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM ET

As BIPOC, we are facing new and insidious forms of racialized animosity and as Unitarian Universalists are continuously called to heal, restore, and work for justice. This forum and Q&A is inspired by Althea Bernstein, a young biracial UU from Wisconsin who was viciously attacked in June, who has asked for this intentional space as a way to educate, connect, and support one another. Althea will be joined by Elandria Williams and Elnora Williams of the Tennessee Valley UU Fellowship that suffered a terrible hate crime and murder in their church sanctuary, and Joseph Santos-Lyons who has chaplained traumatic incidents in the Pacific Northwest including with the young Women of Color targeted on the public train that killed three upstanders who intervened.

RSVP Required to
jsantoslyons@uuma.org by August
25th. Our DRUUMM Chaplains will
also be participating and on hand
for support and pastoral care.

“ I heard a group of people yell the
N-word and I turned my head. And
they threw lighter fluid at me and
then threw like a match or lighter
at me ”

- Althea Bernstein

"My Father lived as an advocate for himself and others with disabilities leading the city of Joliet to name a street in his honor. "

**- Rev. Christopher Long, Assistant Minister
Community Church of New York**



LOCAL BIPOC UU GROUPS SURGE

BY REV. JOSEPH SANTOS-LYONS

There is something magical that happens when I move into a BIPOC UU space. After a really powerful experience as a youth, I was on the edge of our faith as a young adult. I struggled with the contradictions of how White we were as a religious community. My first connection was reading a column in the UUA Young Adult newsletter, and hearing the voice of Alyce Gowdy-Wright. She was another biracial second-generation UU who spoke to my yearning for belonging and racial justice as part of my spiritual formation.

Later I found my way into DRUUMM as it was forming in the 1990s. The relationships I forged with other BIPOC UUs have been the core of my experience as a minister. These bonds have been the source of mentorship, teaching, peer support and pastoral care.

There is a sense of relief when I cross the threshold into a BIPOC UU space. BIPOC are an estimated 2% of the UUA census, that is a ratio of 25 to 1, and this is profound and lonely. Dr. Mark Hicks of the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School talked with a group of DRUUMM organizers about the “deep sigh”, that embodiment of entering a BIPOC circle where we are more liberated from the doubts and aggressions of a dominant White congregation. I’ve felt that relief and freedom that opens the way to a deeper sense of presence and mutuality.

We need more of these BIPOC UU spaces. Our DRUUMM Organizing Project is working to identify and build a robust network with local BIPOC UU groups throughout the UUA.

We are in the process of deep listening and one on one interviews, in order to more intentionally support and resource these groups.

There are over 50 existing and emerging BIPOC UU groups, many inspired by experiences with DRUUMM at the General Assembly as well as the various anti-racism programs such as Jubilee World and Beloved Conversations. These groups are primarily based in congregations but also operating in clusters, states and regions.



LOCAL BIPOC UU GROUPS SURGE (CONTINUED)

We're also noticing the global connections, with so many more BIPOC UU having an immigrant, refugee or asylum experience, and having family around the world. This creates new opportunities as we imagine new, more meaningful and more inclusive forms of worship, fellowship, and social justice.

You can learn more about these groups in the DRUUMM Local BIPOC Group Directory that we published for the first time in 2020, and if you're considering starting or rekindling a BIPOC Group and would like someone to brainstorm and dream with, we encourage you to reach out to us. To serve those who have been invisible, to build community among people who have been on the margins, is sacred work.

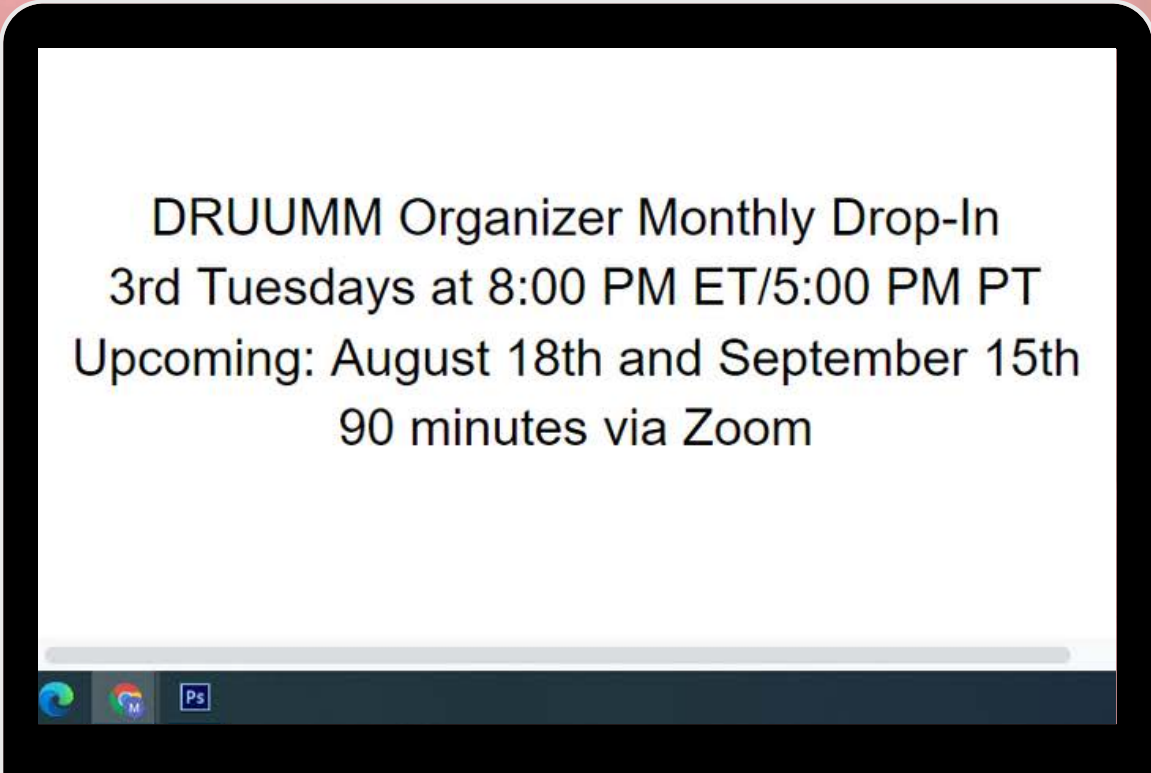
Each of these groups has an average of 10 BIPOC UU, some as many as 75 in their network. This means that each month, across fifty groups, over 500 BIPOC UU are meeting for fellowship, worship, and social justice. These groups are a part of the visible welcome and ministry of their church for BIPOC seeking our affirming and progressive religious community.

They're also increasingly a key part of the larger leadership pipeline for Unitarian Universalism, where our lay and religious professionals are emerging from to serve our movement.



Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons serves as DRUUMM Consulting Minister

DRUUMM ORGANIZER DROP-IN



DRUUMM Organizer Monthly Drop-In
3rd Tuesdays at 8:00 PM ET/5:00 PM PT
Upcoming: August 18th and September 15th
90 minutes via Zoom

On behalf of DRUUMM, we invite organizers and facilitators of local BIPOC UU groups to attend our monthly drop-in sessions for peer support, resource sharing, and leadership development. These lightly facilitated Zoom sessions are an opportunity to connect with other leaders, have a sounding board for struggles and successes, and gather ideas and practices to sustain you and your ministry.

The sessions run 90 minutes. Bring your whole selves, your questions, and your experiences as we cultivate a meaningful and powerful Unitarian Universalist ministry together. For more information, contact Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons, jsantoslyons@uuma.org.



"This is a photo of my kitties. I spend a lot of time taking their photos, and cuddling with them. It brings me such peace during these difficult times."

- Rev. Summer Albayati of California

I DON'T NEED TO KNOW THAT

BY DEREAU FARRAR

Like many of you in the past week, I watched the Sam Feder documentary, *Disclosure*. I won't say much more about the film itself other than that it is one of the most comprehensive and thoroughly analyzed documentaries I have seen in quite a long time. It is beautifully done, and I think you should seek it out.

Since watching it, I can't help but to keep thinking about and noticing how much we - how much I prioritize information, sometimes at the expense of the proper care of others. I'll often wonder about something or someone in ways that a) are none of my damn business, and b) don't matter in the context of how I should treat them. Sometimes I wonder things about someone's gender identity or expression, or maybe about their racial makeup, or their sexual or romantic orientation, or even about the presence of disability or mental illness in their lives. And, somehow, I have convinced myself that if I know more about a person's being, it will help me to be more understanding and empathetic and inclusive. I have allowed myself to believe that it will help me to find more ways to identify with them and that is where we will begin the basis of our connection.

At the risk of cheapening the poi Or maybe a little closer to home, those who are unable to enjoy music in other languages in worship without ready access to an English translation.

What I am now coming to understand is how violent this way of moving in the world is. Must we also colonize people's identities for the benefit of our own edification?

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying that identity doesn't matter. Identity erasure is still very much a problem of white supremacy culture in liberal and progressive circles. No, in fact, a person's identity does matter and informs how we each live our daily lives. However, this does not justify using a person's demographic information as a form of social analytics.

What if I treated every person the way I expect to be treated, regardless of what I either do or do not know about them? What if, as people share their lives with me, I receive it as the blessing it is - that they would trust me enough to hold a part of their sacred selves and care for it well? What can I learn of myself by embracing mystery and unknowing?

I am beginning a journey of saying more to myself, "I don't need to know that." I pray it expands my capacity to love. Anyone care to join me?

Here's a little soundtrack for the road:
<https://youtu.be/knj36fq2Y5w>

DeReau K. Farrar is director of music at First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon, and a President of the board of the Association of Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries.

THE PRICE WE PAY



E. Ethelred Brown

Even... a free liberal church must pay the price. There is the price of tolerating all the different types of persons all the varying types of minds which are attracted by the word liberal. It must pay the price of a small following while it slowly, painfully builds up itself without compromise, without the shadow of a turning either to the right or the left. We here know it is a hard price to pay, for we all have a liking for the crowd.... And at our best we thank God that we are willing to pay the price, if this is the price which loyalty to Truth demands—believing that the day will come when real success will crown our efforts, and that in those days we shall realize that the success attained at last has fully paid us for the price we paid in heart-breaking toil and in faith disturbing patience.

—Rev. Ethelred Brown,
“The Price We Pay”, 1947

ASSEMBLIES, GATHERINGS, EVENTS, AND CIRCLES- OH MY!

BY IMARI KARIOTIS

As the DRUUMM Assembly, Conference & Meetings Coordinator (ACMC) I wanted to give an update on what I have been doing while many of the Steering Committee members took a small break in July.

What is it I do? Here is the small answer from the **Standard Operating Procedure Book (SOP)**:

“The DRUUMM Assembly, Conference & Meeting Coordinator manages all the activities that make DRUUMM and Supported ASSEMBLY, CONFERENCE, CAUCUSING, GATHERINGS MEETINGS, and EVENTS successful. They choose speakers and presenters, work with Outreach, and the Communication teams to promote the event and make sure arrangements for speakers are set with DRUUMM Steering Committee by working within the TEAM structure. ACMC organizes conferences for DRUUMM and chooses a committee to help them. They measure the success of their events by the number and quality of participants they attract and the feedback from participants.”

I have now entered my official first year in this role, but I have over 3 decades of experience planning and promoting events from logistics to advertising.

With help from the Steering Committee (SC) this year we worked on which programs to hold within the DRUUMM Village "Space" at GA and which to move to the Fall 2020/Spring 2021 gatherings.

In July we met with our General Assembly Planning Committee (GAPC) liaison about General Assembly 2020, and after reading through the feedback attendees sent this is what was shared:

For the first virtual event, we were able to convert what would have been in-person events into either pre-recorded or streamed events.

I asked for a better lead time (several months) if we are doing virtual programming. I will suggest pre-recording content based on the location of that General Assembly so it can start sooner, and when the theme is released DRUUMM can work on worship, workshops and circles with a better focus on the UUA's selected theme. I also shared DRUUMM's [Mission Statement](#).

What I learned in speaking with many of you is that almost 97% want to see the virtual platform for events continue or used as a complement to face-to-face events in order to be more accessible, financially reasonable, etc. Also, not many knew that the UUA had already had this platform set for the last decade and that the GAPC added to it to make it the full virtual platform we used this year.

ASSEMBLIES, GATHERINGS, EVENTS, AND CIRCLES- OH MY! (CONTINUED)

Many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color have had some qualms about next year's General Assembly location based on conversations and questions asked. I also requested that I be able to attend GAPC meetings and conversations about General Assembly and that there should be seats for the leads working on GA from the various BIPOC, Disabled and marginalized organizations, because having a seat at the table would be a proactive way of dealing with planning and reducing the reactionary actions that happened during this GA. If you are interested in helping for the next General Assembly you can drop an email to GA@DRUUMM.ORG.

My father used to say we are all facets of a gem: and each of us adds our facet to the gem as a whole and if we are not present the gem will not shine:



Which brings me back to my ask of DRUUMM Members. There are a lot of “back-of-house” operations and trainings to be done to make sure things happen smoothly for DRUUMM Village Space.

We rely on many volunteers to be on our TEAMS to plan events--from facilitators, chat chaplains, tech (Zoom) moderators, worship team and DRUUMM Event Email Cohorts (Volunteer Team that answers questions during GA and other events), etc. “Our ability to provide ethnic-, spirituality/faith-, and region-based Identity Caucuses depends on your support!” ACMC would set up Chat Chaplain Training, Facilitator Training, email response training, and FAQ building for events.

In July I started working on The DRUUMM **Fall Gathering: Live, Work, Create!** Most programming will be held **October 9-11, 2020**, with the possibility of Regional and Identity Caucusing happening **October 1-8**. This way there is a way to meet with each other before the main programming begins. I put out an ask for individuals that want to help with this, and to date I have eight individuals that have expressed interest.

For the Steering Committee, DRUUMM Members, and those working on the event, Fall Gathering programming will include the SC Pre-Meeting and the Annual Meeting. After-Fall Gathering event meetings will include the SC Post-Meeting, Workshop, Worship, Programming, and Facilitator Decompression Meeting.

Some other programming suggestions: General Assembly 2021 Discussion (Wisconsin GA), UU The Vote, Nonviolent Communication, BIPOC UU History Panel, Ministry Match Workshop (discussion on the different types of ministry: traditional, lay, music, lifespan RE...) and FUUN night with maybe a UU Drag Show.

ASSEMBLIES, GATHERINGS, EVENTS, AND CIRCLES- OH MY! (CONTINUED)

Some of the ideas for the Fall Gathering are:

On-Demand Spiritual Practice: Yoga, Meditation, Spiritual Journaling, Automatic writing, Beauty Ritual as Spiritual Practice, Tarot daily card draw

Live Worship: BLUU Haven Worship, APIC Worship, BIPOC Earth-Centered, DRUUMM Elders Worship, SC Worship Service, YAYA Led Worship, Lay leaders Worship, Family Worship (20 minutes, lead by a DRE), Cassie Montenegro's sermon on Colorism paired with Lupita N'yongo's new book

Youth and Young Adult (YAYA)

Programming: Daily Youth Caucusing, Youth Drop-In (social time), Emerging Adult Drop-In (social time), YA Lead, 20s and 30s Drop-In (social time), DRUUMM YAYA Listening Circle (time for the SC to share goals and get input), Dinner Church

Family Programming/Multi-Gen

Programming: Time for all ages (storytime, craft time, art time, skill share, community talent Show, cooking show)

DRUUMM ACMC will reach out to Allies for Racial Equity (ARE) to have complementary offerings to support and complement our work by offering white family members space during the Fall Gathering.

Some programming ideas we'll ask for: Youth Caucusing, Spiritual Practices, Adult Caucusing, YAYA Leadership and Activism Workshop, and Worship.

And these are just some of the suggestions that were brought forward. Would you like to add anything and help?

If you want to help out with the Fall Gathering or have any questions, comments, programming, or visions you can drop an email to me at DRUUMMACMC@gmail.com. You can also friend me on the [Book of Faces](#).



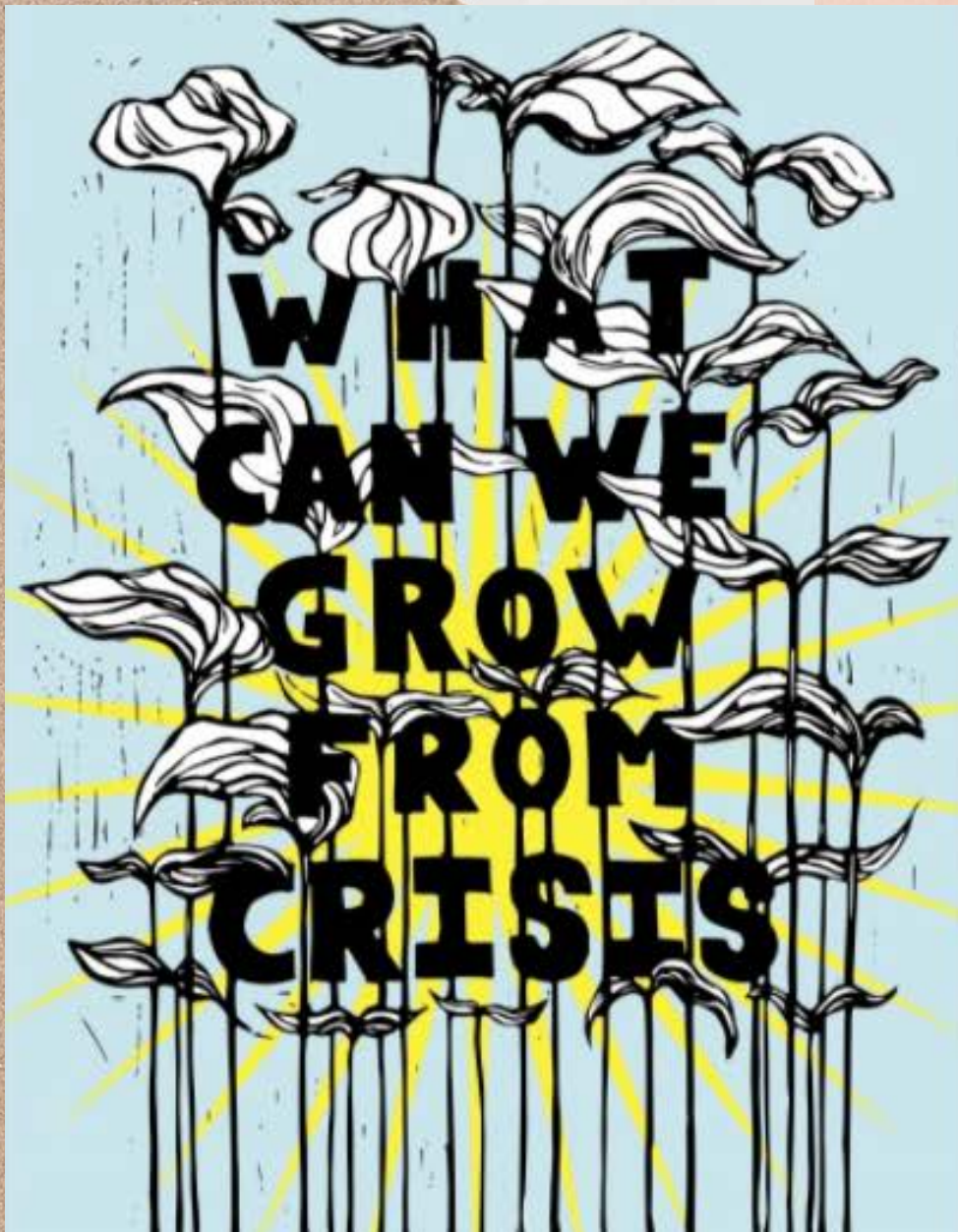


Photo Credit:

What Can We Grow From
by Pete Railand of
JustSeeds- "Been thinking
a lot about this during
the times of COVID 19.
What can we grow from
crisis, where will we go
from here? It's time to re-
imagine. Nothing is
inevitable, everything is
possible."

DRUUMM STEERING COMMITTEE 2020-2021

*The DRUUMM Steering
Committee is made up of
members elected to three year
terms at our annual meeting.*

*For more information you
can reach them at
info@druumm.org.*

- President **Ayanna Kafi Stringer**, Georgia
- Vice President/President Elect **Cassie Montenegro**, Florida
- Vice President **Mathew Taylor**, California
- Secretary **Janell Hill**, Minnesota
- Treasurer **Eric Huang**, Texas
- Communications Co-Coordinator **Rhiannon Smith**, California

- Communications Co-Coordinator **Nicole Pressley**, Georgia
- GA Co-Coordinator **Imari S. Nuyen-Kariotis**, California
- Outreach Co-Coordinator **Noel Burke**, Missouri
- Outreach Co-Coordinator **Kaitlin Dey**, California
- UUA Liaison **Michael J Crumpler**, New York

NOTATIONS

- The DRUUMM Membership has more than doubled in a year and a half from 86 members in January 2019 to 221 members in June 2020.
- Chris Cameron wrote an insightful essay entitled "Transformative Faith—The Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism" published on the Black Perspectives blog published by the African American Intellectual History Society.
- Jen Simon, AJ Blackwood, Rev. Angela Henderson and Matteo Frisk are organizing a BIPOC speaker series with sponsorship from seven UU congregations in Colorado.
- The DRUUMM Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus hosted a virtual coffee chat in July with over 20 attending.
- The UU Ministers Association approved substantive changes to the Code of Conduct for ministers including new forms of accountability and restorative justice.
- Rev. Tania Marquez of First UU San Diego is hosting a weekly Spanish Language UU Vespers via Zoom.
- Rev. Hope Johnson of Brooklyn and Paula Cole Jones of DC are hosting weekly gatherings of Religious Professionals of Color in the Central East Region that is gathering several dozen participants.

COLOR/FULL: A DRUUMM GLOBAL MAJORITIES PROJECT



**RAMON URBANO
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA**

GOAL

Getting an update on what the UUA is doing on immigration, cause that's what I work on.

GIFT

Probably context, from the congregation in my area. And interfaith: Presbyterians, Lutherans, Catholics, Episcopalians, and Quaker friends.



The DRUUMM Beat Issue 13, Volume 2

Editor Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons Newsletter Team: Rochelle Fortier

Editorial Board: Rhiannon Smith

For inquiries please email editor@druumm.org

The DRUUMM Beat is published under the direction of the DRUUMM Steering Committee and the Communications Portfolio. Join in the conversation with DRUUMM on Twitter and follow us on Facebook for the latest news.

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