



# THE DRUUMM BEAT

DIVERSE & REVOLUTIONARY UU MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

AUGUST 2021

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 21



## DRUUMM Regional Caucuses

Saturday, September 18th, 2021  
4:00 PM to 6:30 PM Eastern



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DRUUMM was forged from the leadership of the African American Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries, Latino/a UU Networking Association, and clergy of Asian and Middle Eastern descent in the 1990s. Our formation was akin to “a community of communities” as our early DRUUMM President Paula Cole Jones has preached. Caucusing has been core to our organization, with intentional meetings of our membership being essential to our mission of racial healing and transformative justice. We endeavor to hold the complexity of both/and space, where caucuses define community needs and generate action, and also come together in solidarity between caucuses for deeper relationships and collective power.

This 2021-2022 year, we are continuing our tradition of hosting Regional Caucuses in the Fall 2021. In the Spring 2022, we anticipate hosting Racial/Cultural Caucuses. These are facilitated by DRUUMM members and open to BIPOC friends.

### **DRUUMM Regional Caucuses**

Saturday, September 18th

4:00 PM to 6:30 PM Eastern (1:00 PM Pacific)

Register: <https://druumm.wildapricot.org/event-4447188>

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. DRUUMM is hosting regional 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. This is sacred work that makes space for the spirit and shapes our UU faith.

The Regional Caucuses will happen simultaneously via our virtual Zoom room and caucuses will meet in breakout rooms with facilitators. Our agenda will center on relationship building, sharing your story, and checking in. We'll be focusing our discussion on the ways we are sustained and uplifted as Unitarian Universalists. This is a BIPOC-only program.





# FROM BEFORE/AFTER TO AMONG

We are sharing this Pastoral Message: From Before/After to Among by the Rev. Christina Shu, one of our **DRUUMM Chaplain Team**. Members seeking to connect with a chaplain, we are here for you.



For a long time, it felt like I was living in a binary of before/after. In addition to being a DRUUMM chaplain, I work as a hospital chaplain in a major medical center, and 2020 was one of the hardest years I've ever experienced. There were so many "befores" and so many "afters," some hoped for, imagined, or experienced. I frequently referred to "Before the pandemic..." and "after the pandemic is over...."

Before the pandemic... I loved to go to karaoke; before the pandemic we held all our meetings in-person;

before the pandemic this part of the hospital was for cardiac monitoring and now it's for COVID-19 patients. After...after I received the vaccine I could walk the hospital with less fear; after the winter I took my first vacation in a year; after the re-opening I ate at a restaurant indoors. There are other before/ after moments that our society references often: before and after the November 2020 election, before and after George Floyd's death. But I've come to realize that there is no clear before and after.



Placing a before and after around an event implies that it is a singular event, something with a clear ending and beginning. We are currently experiencing a confusing and anxious period of rising COVID numbers for some in the US and huge numbers around the world, re-openings (including our congregations), and worries about variants, vaccinations for children, and more. There is no before/after for our country's reckoning with racial injustice, especially for People of Color. Even for those of us who are experiencing some relative privilege and feel new-found relief, freedom or safety, we are still carrying and processing all of our experiences of last year.

So I suggest moving from a linear trajectory of before/after to a philosophy of "among." COVID is still among us. Grief and loss are among us. Injustice is among us. We are among fear and doubt, hope and uncertainty, burnout and joy. The philosophy of "among" speaks to feeling surrounded by, in the middle of, between and betwixt. When we are among, there is no immediate positive release of a perfect "after." Instead we might ask, how do we carry hope amongst despair? How do we integrate our losses and scars into new rhythms and forms, even as we experience new tragedies and suffering? How do we keep going—keep resting, resisting, remembering? How do we keep growing and building community amongst division and isolation?

What is your "before/after" and your "among?" My prayer for our DRUUMM is that we know ourselves to be amongst a Beloved Community in a time of storm and transformation, continuing to nurture ourselves and one another with love and kindness.



**Rev. Christina Shu**

DRUUMM Chaplain Team

Please reach out to us if we can support you.

<https://www.druumm.org/meet-our-chaplains/>

# WHY SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE BLACK COMMUNITY AND AAPI COMMUNITY IS ESSENTIAL

BY ALEXANDRA LEE-JOBE

In light of the numerous recent attacks on Asian Americans, we must examine the issue carefully. I've heard some members of the APIC community who are distressed and upset about these incidents, and feel dislike for the members of the Black community committing these hate crimes/incidents. I, myself, am reluctant to move freely in my community, and do so with caution and vigilance. So, what factors lead to these assaults?

One, individuals involved both suffer the effects of poverty, which have only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Both elderly Asians and African Americans share these same low income communities. Two, the ex-president used China & Chinese Americans as scapegoats to deflect his own inadequacies in dealing with the Coronavirus. He used racist terms, such as "Chinese Virus" and "Kung Flu." Third, the "Model Minority" myth,

perpetrated by White Supremacy intentionally pits the two communities against each other. Holding Asians up as hard working, quiet, studious and therefore successful, only serves those in power with a wedge to separate the two communities. Throughout history there have been numerous

times APIC and Black folx have worked in solidarity. Going back to 1869, Frederick Douglas, famous African American abolitionist advocated for Chinese and Japanese immigration, when whites were burning down Chinatowns and massacring (1871) us. Then, in 1965-75, Dr. Martin Luther King, Muhammed Ali, and Malcolm X all spoke out against the Vietnamese War. And, recently, in 2020, Asian Americans showed support for Black Lives Matter by writing and sharing "Letters for Black Lives", which is a multilingual resource for APIC family conversations. LINK These are only 3 or more occasions of solidarity. I'm not blind to the historical difficulties and challenges our two communities have faced in the past. Yet, I believe it would be in all our best interests to look beyond the racial elements to investigate the underlying issues. One answer that I, as an educator, am always promoting is comprehensive Ethnic Studies. If children see others as their family members, why would they harm them? And, yes, there must be consequences for harming others, but incarceration hasn't proven to create positive change.



Building more bridges between our two communities can be a significant start. If not, we play into the hands of the White Supremacists, and create deeper divisions, which doesn't help us at all. As BIPOC UU's we have a wonderful opportunity to shape a stronger, more just future.



In Lak'esh (I Am You or You Are Me) Luis Valdez's Mayan -Inspired poem

**Tu eres mi otro yo.  
Si te hago daño a ti  
Me hago daño a mi  
mesmo  
Si te amo y respeto  
Me amo y respeto yo you**

**You are my other me  
If I do harm to you  
I do harm to myself  
If I love and respect  
I love and respect myself**



Hi Beloveds! My name is Alexandra (Alex) Lee-Jobe from the UU Church of Davis, in Ca., on Yocha Dehe Wintun land, and my pronouns are she/her/hers. I am a first generation Chinese woman, who identifies as AAPI/BIPOC/UU. In 2020, I retired from a 30+ year career as a teacher of young children. I enjoyed focusing on honoring my student's heritage and witnessing them learn and thrive. I have 2 wonderful adult kids, a lovely granddaughter, and had a son that died in 2017 at 25. In my retirement, I'm choosing to unapologetically live my identity as a member of the World Majority.

UPDATE: Kimmy Yam states in her NBC News article: "While news reports and social media have perpetuated the idea that anti-Asian violence is committed mostly by people of color, a new analysis shows the majority of attackers are white."





# REMEMBERING OUR DIVINE SELF

*DRUUMM and the UUA Office of Multicultural Ministries are hosting a two part workshop series centering BIPOC wellness and spiritual practice.*

**Remembering Our Divine Self** is a four hour program led by facilitator and healer Noilyn Mendoza that is designed to re-reconnect us to our full bodies.

Monday October 4th and Monday October 11th, 2021

8:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern (5:00 PM Pacific)

Cost: Free for DRUUMM Members, \$25 USD for BIPOC Friends

For more information and registration visit [www.druumm.org](http://www.druumm.org) and click on "events" or contact [dawn.druumm@gmail.org](mailto:dawn.druumm@gmail.org)

Everyday our bodies are giving us signals for areas that are asking for more attention.

Participants will learn the use of embodiment practices such as body scan, guided visualization, and breathwork. Together, we will listen to and harness our innate body wisdom

A lot of our inner conflict or suffering comes from our parts not being heard or listened to. And what happens when that happens? They

have to get louder, and sometimes that manifests as a feeling, or behavior, or even a physical symptom that will get so loud because it hasn't been paid attention to. It hasn't been given a voice.

The more we ignore these unheard parts of us - the more amplified its pleas become. And eventually, it can even manifest physically or emotionally as an ailment or an injury, so that we have to listen to that accumulated, yet unanswered need.

Yet all of us have a known yet rarely tapped intelligence within us - our innate wisdom or intuition. Our trust in what we already know to be true. We have been taught not to trust this wisdom, outsource our intuition, and doubt our own. But the truth is that you are your own best expert. You carry with you the DNA, imprint of generations before you of pathfinders and way seekers. You are the authority of what your body, heart, and soul needs to realign, find joy, and heal.



# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

For more information, please visit [www.druumm.org](http://www.druumm.org)

or contact [dawn.druumm@gmail.com](mailto:dawn.druumm@gmail.com).

## AUGUST

August 2 Installation Ceremony of the DRUUMM Steering Committee  
August 10 Asian Pacific Islander Caucus  
August 11 Member Orientation  
August 17 BIPOC Models of Ministry with Rev. Jen Simon of The Mountain Top

## SEPTEMBER

September 2 Indigenous/Native Caucus of DRUUMM  
September 9 Member Orientation  
September 14 Asian Pacific Islander Caucus  
September 18 DRUUMM Regional Caucuses  
September 21 BIPOC Organizer/Facilitator Drop-In

## OCTOBER

October 2 Latinx Caucus of DRUUMM  
October 4 & 11 Remembering Our Divine Self BIPOC wellness workshop  
October 10 Member Orientation  
October 12 Asian Pacific Islander Caucus



**REMEMBERING OUR DIVINE SELF**  
Noilyn Mendoza  
Facilitator  
Mon, Oct 4 8pm - 10pm ET  
Mon Oct 18 8pm - 10pm ET  
Workshop reserved for Black, Indigenous and People of Color  
[www.druumm.org](http://www.druumm.org)



# BLACK Queer Joy



This is black joy. This is queer joy.  
This is pure, ornery joy. This is the  
reminder that we are our  
Ancestors' wildest dreams and the  
hope of those still to come. This is  
the knowing that you, and I, and all  
of us, are plows in the land of milk  
and honey.  
This is me.

## **Rev. Byron Tyler Coles**

*Congratulations to Rev. Tyler and  
thank you for your years of service  
on the DRUUMM Steering  
Committee.*





# Spiritual Odyssey Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley

*A DRUUMM member-only event*

Thursday, September 30th, 2021  
8:00 PM Eastern / 5:00 PM Pacific  
RSVP: [www.druumm.org](http://www.druumm.org)

## 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](mailto:info@druumm.org).*

- President **Ayanna Kafi Stringer**, Georgia
- Vice President **Mathew Taylor**, California
- Vice President **Dandilion Prinsloo**, Georgia
- Secretary **Sangye Hawke**, California
- Treasurer **Eric Huang**, Texas
- Communications Coordinator **Nicole Pressley**, Georgia
- GA Coordinator **Imari S. Nuyen-Kariotis**, California
- Outreach Co-Coordinator **Noel Burke**, Missouri
- Outreach Co-Coordinator **Paul Niyonzigiye**, Maine
- UUA Liaison **Michael J Crumpler**, New York





### Ayanna Kafi, DRUUMM President

I came to DRUUMM leadership with the distinct goal of having space for my work and my ministry, without constraint. The gift of this community has been truly endless opportunities for me to serve. What I know about DRUUMM after my 2 years on the Steering Committee is that this space isn't shaped by a singular person or group. The DRUUMM community and DRUUMM spaces are shaped by whoever shows up and whoever chooses to lend their skills. This communal leadership model will be permanently imprinted on my heart and hopefully will be echoed in my future.

- The Indigenous/Native Caucus meets on September 2nd, and the Latinx Caucus meets on October 2nd. RSVP via the member portal at [druumm.wildapricot.org](http://druumm.wildapricot.org) (your email is your username).
- 60 members attended the August 2nd Installation Ceremony of the DRUUMM Steering Committee, with remarks by Rev. Mel Hoover, Paula Cole Jones, Beverly Horton, music by Esperanza Garza-Danweber and Saunder Choi, and our DRUUMM Chaplain Team.
- A DRUUMM cohort of at least 16 members has formed that will participate in the UUA Organizing School "It Starts with Faith" beginning August 25th, and considering a focus on the 8th Principle implementation and adoption.
- A collective of BIPOC clergy who have or are serving in second ministry roles held a roundtable to share experiences and will meet again by the end of year.
- DRUUMM Membership has risen to 343 members. Each month an orientation is hosted virtually, with an average of 10 participants. Check [www.druumm.org/events](http://www.druumm.org/events) for upcoming dates, or request a one-on-one with Noel or Paul, our Outreach co-coordinators.
- The DRUUMM Steering Committee is preparing for a virtual fall retreat to bond more deeply and set their workplan for the year.
- Rev. Marta Valentin will be joining the DRUUMM Chaplain Team.
- We've recently updated the member-only resource list of caucuses and networks with information about BUUYA - Black UU Young Adults.
- The new Comunidad Unitaria has launched, a bilingual project led by several of our Latinx members <https://comunidadunitaria.org/>.



### The DRUUMM Beat Issue 21, Volume 2

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Editorial Board: Nicole Pressley

For inquiries please email [editor@druumm.org](mailto: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.

Read online at [www.druumm.org](http://www.druumm.org)

