



THE DRUUMM BEAT

DIVERSE & REVOLUTIONARY UU MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

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THE LIFE BEAT CONTINUES

The life beat continues through thick and thin.

The Ancestors remind us that they are with us still.

We must carve out “a way out of no way,” as they once did.

Yes, you can.
Yes, you will.
Yes, you must.

The life beat continues through thick and thin.

Generosity of Spirit.
Community Care.
Innumerable Acts of Kindness.
Unbridled Love.

The Ancestors remind us that it is our turn to get and be busy....

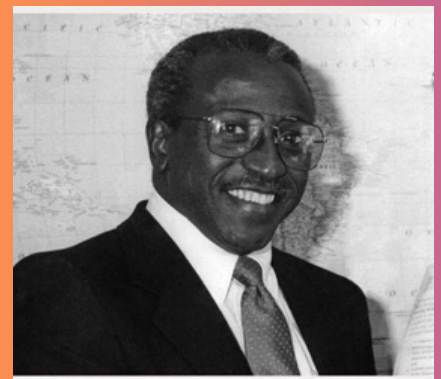
The life beat,
Our life beat,
Continues...

Through thick and thin.

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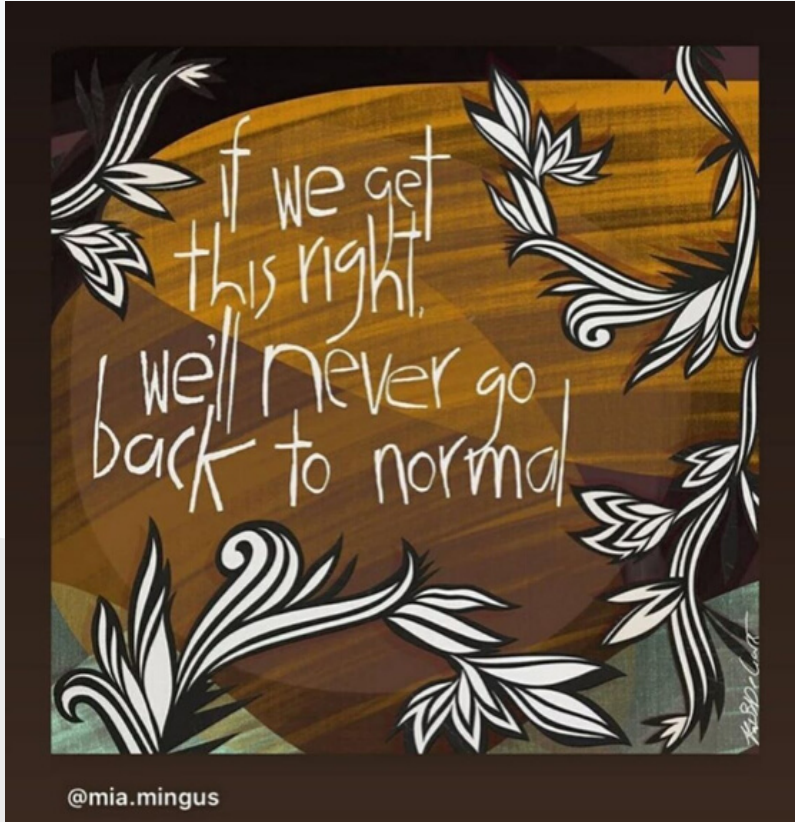
#TBT



Dr. Jim Brown, former President of DRUUMM and Southwest District Executive of the UUA

-Rev. Dr. Hope Johnson DRUUMM Chaplain

RE-IMAGINING THE WORLD



We are being called into new imaginations as we face the covid-19 pandemic. It is connecting us more deeply with the world around us, drawing our gaze to our neighbors and strangers across the Earth. We are likely feeling a lot of contradictions. Fear and love. Wonder and anxiety. Suffering and support. These are not easy times, made harder by sudden and new restrictions for some, and even more extreme restrictions for others. In moments of crisis, our values can be laid bare. How we act in the world is tested. It is also a time when we can be asking big questions, and re-imagining the world.

7 Quarantine Questions to Ask Yourself Daily

1. Have I been drinking enough water?
2. Have I been checking in with myself and allowing myself to process all my feelings no matter how painful or scary?
3. Have I been checking in with my loved ones, family, and friends to offer support as well as to allow them to support me?
4. Have I been properly cultivating the strength and humility necessary to witness and navigate the fall of the American Empire from within?
5. Have I been preparing myself adequately to defend those less fortunate against the inevitable tidal wave of aggression that will rise with the final collapse of the current defunct power structure?
6. Have I the courage to accept that my life will not play out according to the dreams sold to me in my youth?
7. Have I watered the seed of hope planted within my own soul so that it may grow above the canopy of fight-or-flight and into the clear blue sky of a more deliberate tomorrow?

- author unknown



‘Stop imagining the apocalypse, start imagining revolution.’

- neznani junak

Stiamo affrontando un nemico minuscolo e invisibile, ma allo stesso tempo tanto grande da poter mettere in crisi i governi del mondo e cambiare le nostre vite radicalmente. In questa lotta, che ci coinvolge tutti, ognuno di noi fa la sua parte restando a casa ed evitando qualsiasi comportamento che possa aumentare il rischio di contagio. Ma c'è chi combatte in prima linea questa guerra, lavorando instancabilmente e mettendo a rischio la

propria salute per preservare quella degli altri. Per questo ho voluto dedicare questo disegno a tutti gli eroi di questa assurda crisi, gli infermieri, i medici, i ricercatori, ma anche tutti coloro che continuano a garantire i servizi essenziali per la vita di tutti. Spero solo che in qualche modo questa situazione possa avvicinarci e possa far nascere in noi un sentimento di solidarietà che abbracci l'umanità intera, perché solo uniti possiamo farcela.

Gratitude and solidarity with health workers all over the world. These warriors go to work every day with the task of saving as many lives as they can and caring for those who are suffering from this pandemic. Respects to artists creating at a time where art is so healing and necessary.

This is why I wanted to dedicate this drawing to all the heroes of this absurd crisis, nurses, doctors, researchers, but also all those who continue to guarantee essential services for everyone's life. I only hope that in some way this situation can bring us closer and can give rise to a feeling of solidarity that embraces the whole of humanity, because only united we can make it.

#Repost @dec_art.it "Heroes", ink and watercolors on paper. (scorri in basso per la traduzione in italiano)

□ We are facing a microscopic and invisible enemy, but at the same time so big as to be able to put the governments of the world in crisis and radically change our lives. In this struggle, which involves us all, each of us does his part by staying at home and avoiding any behavior that may increase the risk of contagion.

But there are those who fight this war at the forefront, working tirelessly and putting their health at risk to preserve that of others.



#CultureStrike

DRUUMM PRESIDENT TRANSITION



April 6th, 2020

Dear DRUUMM Family,

After ruminating over the last few weeks, I send you this letter of my decision to transition from the DRUUMM presidency. I have accepted a position with the Unitarian Universalist Association's Central East Region as their Congregational Life Field Staff beginning in the summer.

In order to avoid a conflict of interest and also to balance work and life commitments, I will be moving on from the DRUUMM Steering Committee after our General Assembly in June. I leave with mixed emotions as I've come to think of you, our DRUUMM membership, and the DRUUMM Steering Committee as a wonderful, rigorous, and supportive family --- a family that has helped me grow in all aspects of my life; personally, professionally and emotionally over the last three years. I also leave with a sense of excitement; a dream of things to come and the promise of tomorrow.

I will continue to be a DRUUMM member and am excited to witness the extraordinary ways our Steering Committee will lead us in fulfilling the strategic vision they created last fall.

I am committed to supporting you, DRUUMM familia, in my new capacity in the Central East Region, as we root ourselves in healing while aspiring to live up to our dreams as a community and work for collective liberation. I also look forward to wholeheartedly celebrating and supporting the inspiring leadership of Ayanna Kafi who will be moving into the DRUUMM Presidency in June.

Together we are creating space for our community to contemplate this transition and the DRUUMM strategic vision.

With love, respect, and solidarity,

Sana

LISTENING CIRCLES INVITATION

On behalf of Sana Saeed, DRUUMM President, please join us for virtual community listening circles on:

DRUUMM Community Listening Circles

- Wed, April 22nd, 2020 at 7pm EST/6pm CST/5pm MT/4pm PST
- Sat, May 2nd, 2020 at 2pm EST/1pm CST/12pm MT/11am PST

Both virtual circles will be an hour long. Please register here for the call:
<https://forms.gle/gqzjG5Yd5rN6hVr9A>

Sana, Ayanna and Tyler Coles (DRUUMM Communications Co-Chair), will also be holding space for BIPOC to ground ourselves in the spiritual practices that strengthen our resilience and care in times of transition, joy, confusion, grief and sorrow.

You are invited to join us on: DRUUMM Grounding Spiritual Practices

- Fri, April 24th 4pm EST/3pm CST/2pm MT/1pm PST
- Tue, May 19th 7pm EST/6pm CST/5pm MT/4pm PST

Both virtual spiritual practices will be an hour long. Please register here for the call:
<https://forms.gle/WWCoxLNM3paeTSQB7>



The graphic features a circular logo on the left, divided into three segments of teal, orange, and red. The logo contains the text "DRUUMM" in white and "SINCE 1997" in black below it. To the right of the logo, the text "COMMUNITY LISTENING CIRCLES" is written in large, bold, teal letters. Below this, the dates "WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22" and "SATURDAY, MAY 2" are listed in pink. The graphic is framed by a teal border and includes decorative colored squares: a pink square at the top left and a teal square at the bottom right.



TALKING WITH PAULA COLE JONES

Why did you gravitate to DRUUMM and into leadership?

My congregation had a racially sensitive crisis in the late 1990s. We lost fifty People of Color, mostly African Americans. That is when I stepped into leadership in the church. Within my first year, I was invited into a Jubilee Workshop (anti-racism training) and met folks engaged in the wider faith. Later I joined the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team of the former Joseph Priestley District's working group on anti-racism / anti-oppression / multiculturalism.

About the same time, I attended my first General Assembly. I was shocked at how White the UUA was. That Assembly was an emotional roller coaster. I was encouraged to attend the DRUUMM meeting at the Nashville GA in 2000, and glad that I did. It was like finding a home, finding a multicultural community. One thing that really impacted me was when we gathered together into smaller groups,

I connected with a diverse multicultural community of UU People of Color. There was such a range of cultures within DRUUMM, and all of us were being impacted by how race and racism were imposed upon us. Everyone's stories were so similar, even though our particular experiences were different, and this created a unique sense of solidarity.

I first met Paula in person on a cool Fall evening in Atlanta, Georgia. We were at the first DRUUMM youth and young adults of Color retreat held at the Northwest Congregation. We had connected by phone months earlier through my organizing and community scan with congregations seeking to understand the presence, opportunities, and challenges facing young people of color in Unitarian Universalism. Out of these conversations, and building on a vision originally set forth from young adults of color including (now Rev. Dr.) Kristen Jewett Harper, Alyce Gowdy-Wright (#restinpower), Layla Rivera, Danielle Gladd (#restinpower) and James Coomes, we convened fifty participants from around North America.

Paula is a lifelong member of All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington DC, known to be one of the most racially diverse congregations in the UUA. She has served in a range of leadership roles, including as DRUUMM President, and is currently the Interim Congregational Life Staff for the Central East Region of the UUA. I've admired her skills as a competitive martial artist and certified research scuba diver, where she has organized with her husband a Black scuba collective for decades.

~ Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons

What kept you connected?

Robette Dias, Rev. Mel Hoover and Dr. James Brown were a big part of keeping me connected. I was doing antiracism work across the UUA. Ruth Alatore (a Latinx lay DRUUMM member from California) had passed away unexpectedly. She was to be President. I had a conversation with Dr. James Brown (#restinpower), and I agreed to be President-Elect if he served as President. I really took to heart the principle that DRUUMM models the beloved community.

It was compelling to work with the multigenerational, multicultural community and to practice co-leadership and deep partnerships. These are important qualities of DRUUMM spaces. I also appreciated DRUUMM's self-determination and the creation and design of programming and activities by UU People of Color for UU People of Color.

DRUUMM has given the UUA this gift over the years, often uncompensated and unrecognized. When I stepped in as DRUUMM President, it was a difficult time in the UUA. Rev. Bill Sinkford was just beginning his term and there were a lot of new forces at work. Antiracism work was losing significance or positioning in the UUA, and things were changing. DRUUMM created the Mel Hoover Beloved Community Award, recognizing the role Mel had played in the groundwork and leadership for the last generation and honoring his contribution, as he transitioned from directing the Faith in Action staff and programs.

The Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus of DRUUMM was very new, Manish Mishra (a seminarian at the time) was the Chair, and they were considering withdrawing from DRUUMM because of internal struggles for autonomy, visibility, and tensions within the community. As President, and in consultation with Taquiena Boston, I was able to support A/PIC's process for thinking through this decision, encouraging steps similar to the Beyond Categorical Thinking. Ultimately, A/PIC decided to remain, and Manish would later serve a term as President.

In response to some conflict I experienced within DRUUMM, and the conflict that my home congregation had experienced, I began working on reconciliation. After meeting with the Leadership Council to persuade the UUA that DRUUMM should remain in a leadership role in the anti-racism work, Tom Stites, Editor of the UU World magazine expressed an interest in the subject and published my article in 2003. DRUUMM took an important position on accountability, which is that the DRUUMM leaders and members should select their representatives, rather than people being hand-picked by other sources.

My home church recently used this approach to construct a Transformation Team to embed the 8th Principle into every aspect of the church's ministry. The 8th Principle calls us to build the Beloved Community by accountably dismantling racism and oppression. DRUUMM helped the UUA shape a better understanding of accountability.

PAULA COLE JONES PART 3

What do you hope for DRUUMM's future? inclusive community of various identities and not just African Americans.

I would like to see DRUUMM continue to grow and cultivate a larger vision for the Journey Towards Wholeness work. We were told that we should have a 30-year plan to achieve the cultural shift. We are about 20 years into it. Stay the course, build capacity and continue to look at the institutional infrastructure and how we as a faith should live into that. DRUUMM has an important role in being a voice for change.

We all benefit from DRUUMM having strong caucuses and intentional spaces for UU People of Color to gather, grow and strengthen leadership experience. It is important for people to learn that when we say People of Color we are talking about an

There needs to be more imagery of who DRUUMM is. DRUUMM also has the unique ability to convene and activate partners such as the Allies for Racial Equity who share our vision. I would like to see ARE become a more impactful organization to counterbalance racial bias and White supremacy.

Lastly, to be thoughtful about leadership turnover. We have to have better ways to do leadership transitions so that momentum continues to build. Have a clear succession plan, be explicit about it, and be transparent so we can continue to model collective decision-making.



A UU PEOPLE OF COLOR CONVERSATION

Death & Dying with Yuri Yamamoto

Wednesday April 8th, 2020 7:30-9:00 PM Eastern Time
RSVP: jsantoslyons@uuma.org

A LETTER TO YOUNG PEOPLE

by Sara Green

To the young people of color in, off and on the edges of unitarian universalist, we recently got through valentine's day. that weird holiday that many have tried to reclaim- galentines day, celebrating platonic intimacy and posting pictures of pets. this is one more of those attempts. #sorrynotsorry

But I'm no love letterist or literary genius, so I hope you'll excuse my attempt at reworking a sweet friendship letter from pat parker to audre lorde, to you: I know you must be surprised to receive a letter from me, however I am sort of cheating; I discovered these wonderful, wonderful inventions called a Dictaphone and a good typist named Denise. I hope that you and your family are well, give my love to [your family and friends hold you in these times] and tell [them] I'm still waiting for that bridge game [at UUA General Assembly 2020: Rooted, Inspired, & Ready! or Finding Our Way Home or The Well.]

Now, the reason that I am writing is I have become more and more distressed each day about the political situation in this country and feeling very inadequate to respond to what I feel are some very real messages toward [systems of supremacy and domination]. So sitting around one night and brainstorming I got this idea that perhaps there should be some type of [building on the work of those who came before me like Elizabeth Nguyen and countless others... to gather our UU young people together for sustenance, sharing stories and deepening in our faith].

What I'm interested in is a [gathering that is spiritually relevant to the moment]. It's not to be a [regular youth con], it's not to be limited in its scope. I feel that now is the time for [young] people to [get trained up in the art of story telling and connection] ; that now is a time for an organization that addresses itself not only to the needs of [young people in, of and adjacent to Unitarian Universalism] but to have a global perspective and understand our connection with other [communities].

I am in the process now of writing up the [programming for this year's Thrive Youth Week, including the guidelines and goals of the event]. I was thinking about [young people] I would like to be in that organization and of course your name popped into my head, but then it occurred to me that you and I have never sat down and discussed at any great length [your stories and what make you you], other than [being in this same boat of UUism].

I'm adding also [Tie, one of the staff at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix, who is working for justice in the AZ community and has been working for our young people of color in UUism for quite some time. She joins myself and the rest of thrive youth staff India, Tyler and Eric] who have the spiritual-political beliefs and understandings that not only are we anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-fascist, but also we are anti-imperialist and we are opposed to the tradition of the U.S. to plant seeds of domination in our communities, spirits and land.

One of our [strategies is to combat these evils with stories of our people, our histories, our organizing and our resilience]. I was thinking about doing a tour [this summer around this and other summer programs] so there's a possibility, if you are [near one of those places (upstate new york/maine/providence, phoenix, ann arbor and new york city)], that I might see you.

Soon as I have some more information about that I will drop a line or call and let you know what's happening there....I feel somewhat hampered trying to communicate by writing a letter. I look forward to the time when you and I can sit down for a very long period of time and talk out a lot of the things that have been happening to us and happening between us... I do value very much you as a person and your friendship and would hate to see that deteriorate.

Again, I hope that all things are well in your life and the goddess is being good to you; so until I either see you, call you, or write a letter again, take care.

With love,
[Sara]
sgreen@uua.org



SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE DRUUMM STEERING COMMITTEE

Being on the DRUUMM SC allows me to be part of the team cultivating and nurturing a spiritual garden of resources, worship, and support for our community. It's one of the most meaningful parts of my ministry.

- Kia Bordner

Members of DRUUMM are invited to consider joining the Nominations Committee this Spring.

In this role spanning a few short months you will support the efforts of populating and conversing with applicants for the future Steering Committee which will be voted on during the 2020 General Assembly.

If you are interested in joining the Nominations Committee please contact Janell Hill (DRUUMM Secretary) via email at secretary@druumm.org.



NOTATIONS

- As of early March, all UU events including major UU People of Color events have been canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Please check with the hosting organizations regarding future events.
- Finding Our Way Home, the annual gathering of UU Religious Professionals of Color has been canceled for 2020 in person, and several programs were held virtually via zoom. We anticipate 2021 being held in Long Beach CA.
- Many events are going online, including Sunday worship, small group ministries, and religious education.
- Early registration for UUA General Assembly has been extended until April 30. GA may go virtual, and DRUUMM will have a presence either way.

COLOR/FULL



THERESA HARDY

GOAL

To reconnect with colleagues. Kind of get an update on institutional happenings. And gather all the information that I can from the multiple people here doing justice work so I can continue doing the work of saving who we can — while we protect what's left of our failing democracy.

GIFT

I have intense compassion and the ability to be pastoral with people I agree and disagree with. I like plain speaking. I tend to play the role of the holy fool. I feel free to put my hand up and say the things that usually a lot of people are thinking, but don't feel comfortable saying. I'm okay with looking dumb or uninformed, I just speak plainly and get the truth out.



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Editor Rev. Joseph Santos-Lyons
Newsletter Team: Rochelle Fortier, Marion Kee
Editorial Board: Rhiannon Smith, Tyler Coles
For inquiries please email editor@druumm.org

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