

THE DRUMM BEAT

DIVERSE & REVOLUTIONARY UU MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES

MAY 2021

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FULLY ALIVE

By Pamela Wat

Last September my father had a massive stroke. He suddenly lost use of his left arm and leg, he lost his ability to know where he was, and could not fathom what was happening to his body and mind. A few weeks later, at the nursing home (where we could not visit him due to COVID restrictions), he became severely dehydrated, developed an infection, lost his ability to swallow, and could no longer empty his bladder. My family resolved to bring him home and I became his primary caregiver. When it became clear that he was actually going to survive all of this, we acquired a one-bedroom apartment that he and I could share (which is down the hall from the apartment my husband and I had moved into a few months earlier to care for his mother who has late-stage Alzheimer's and who was also not thriving in a nursing home during the pandemic).

I have had to take an extended leave of absence from my paid ministry to continue this caregiving role, and I'm working through how to return to ministry and how to do both ministry and caregiving well. I get mixed messages about which is more important.

But here's the thing, in January of 2020, before I was concerned about COVID or social distancing or quarantines (or strokes), I set an intention. I had been wanting a closer relationship with my father and I said out loud and wrote in my journal that my goal in the coming year is to spend more one-on-one time with my father. ***Continued on Page 7***



REV. PAMELA WAT

STRENGTHENING AND SOFTENING



Over 500 people gathered for DRUUMM's Worship and Fundraiser on May 19, 2021, joining together for a virtual service led by members and open to the wider community. The Rev. Mitra Rahnema asked us "what strengthens and softens you about DRUUMM", and from the voices of our members, delivered a homily entitled "Becoming Human, Again and Again", uplifting Black, Indigenous and People of Color in Unitarian Universalism. The presence and power of DRUUMM and the sacred spaces we create sustain us in our humanity. Joshua Long and Nicole Rumeau shared their gifts of music and worship arts. You can hear Rev. Mitra's message and the full service at www.druumm.org or livestream from the DRUUMM Facebook Page.

STRENGTHENING AND SOFTENING

Thank you to our co-sponsors

All Souls Church Unitarian DC
Allies for Racial Equity
Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus of DRUUMM
Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism
Central East Region People of Color
Church of the Larger Fellowship
Coalition of Unitarian Universalist State
Action Networks
Covenant Unitarian Universalist
Eastshore Unitarian Church
Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
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Richmond
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San
Antonio
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Francisco
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Indigenous Caucus of DRUUMM

Latinx Caucus of DRUUMM
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Unitarian Universalist Association Multicultural
Ministries
Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Wildflower Church: A Unitarian Universalist
Congregation

Appreciations to our officiants: Ayanna Kafi, Esperanza Garza-Danweber, Rev. Manish Mishra, and Rhonda Brown. Thank you to all who attended, who donated, and to the congregations and community organizations who co-sponsored the program. Together we reached our goal of \$35,000 to expand our organizing and chaplaincy work.



THE ORDINATION OF SANA SAEED

Rev. Sana Saeed is a past DRUUMM President and currently serves as Congregational Life Staff for the UUA Central East Region.

the ORDINATION of SANA SAEED

ALL ARE WELCOME...

"WE SHALL BE KNOWN BY THE COMPANY WE KEEP"

IN THE MUSLIM TRADITION...
 TODAY... the NIGHT of POWER OR DESTINY LAYLAL AL QADR
 WHEN the QURAN WAS FIRST SENT from HEAVEN, FIRST VERSES REVEALED for the PROPHET MUHAMMAD
 "THE NIGHT of DECREE PRAYERS ON THIS NIGHT ARE POWERFUL."
 BETTER than 1000 MONTHS
 A SALAAM ALAIKUM
 THERE IS ROOM for ALL of US.
 ALWAYS CALLING

AMEN, AGE, BLESSED BE.
WELCOMING the ANCESTORS
 WE RECOGNIZE WE DID NOT COME HERE ALONE.
ORDINATION
 the PUBLIC DECLARATION in SUPPORT of the CALLING
 AND a TIME to REFLECT on ALL of OUR OWN CALLS.

TIME FOR ALL AGES STORY
 I WANT to MAKE an OHLETTE!
 NO... I HAVE FLOUR...
 DO YOU HAVE ANY EGGS?
 NO... I HAVE BUTTER... LET'S MAKE a PIE!
 I HAVE RASPBERRIES
 NO... I HAVE VANILLA...
 WHY SHOULD MOUSE GET a PIECE?
 NEVER FORGET THOSE THAT BRING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

CHALICE LIGHTING
 LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT: the LENAPE. LET THIS BE A STEP TOWARD ACTION

FIRST PARISH in CAMBRIDGE, MA
 MAY 8, 2021

the ORDINATION of SANA SAEED

"PREACH the TRUTH AS YOU SEE IT."
 "MAY YOUR MINISTRY NURISH YOU."

the WORLD is BETTER BECAUSE of YOUR MINISTRY.

BLESSING of HANDS
 YOUR UUA IDENTITY
 MAY YOUR HANDS EMBRACE YOUR MUSLIM IDENTITY
 YOUR POWER and DESTINY DHIKIR

ALL of US HAVE the POWER to BLESS
 DO NOT DEPRIVE US of YOUR LEADERSHIP.
 WE ARE NOT JUST COLLEAGUES, WE ARE a COMMUNITY of LOVE
 WE COMMIT to YOUR MINISTRY...
 CHARGE to the MINISTER
 DO NOT sit in the SIDDLE...
 CHARGE to the PEOPLE
 SAY YES to BEING in YOUR POWER
 BREAK the CYCLE
 RIDING the WHEEL OR SPINNING the ARC?

COMMON to US all...
 GOD is ONE
 WE are ALL CALLED
 PUTTING our FAITH into ACTION.
 I DEDICATE MYSELF to this WORK...
 I KNOW I CANNOT do it ALONE.
 HAJAR'S STRENGTH, PERSEVERANCE, a VICTOR

the STORY OF HAJAR the MatriARCH of ISLAM
 DO YOU ALLOW US to SETTLE AROUND the WELL?
 YES... AND YOU CANNOT own the WATER
 GOD... MAKING a WAY out of NO WAY
 NONE of US ARE FREE UNTIL ALL of US ARE FREE
 HER SON, ISMAYIL

the BENEDICTION
 "WHERE YOU GO, I WILL GO"
 "I COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR"
 "MAY YOU FIGHT FOR JUSTICE WITH RIGOR."
 TO KNOW GOD, ONE has to ONES

TAKE WHAT YOU NEED FROM this STORY...

OPEN-HEARTED BEAUTY

BY REV. DR. BILL SINKFORD

Last week I blogged about Broken Hearts and the sometimes necessary breaking of patterns that, in their time, may have been needed, but which end up holding us in place. I almost wrote “holding us back” but that feels like it has too much of judgment in it for what I was describing.

The theme of emergence does call up for me struggles overcome, challenges met or at least moved through. There is something in the emergence theme of moving beyond, successfully transcending that has truth about it. In order to emerge we must leave.

Even the most privileged and protected of us does not, I think experience life without challenges. I remember going to Harvard as a scholarship kid from a public school in the Midwest and believing that my classmates from wealthy families and Prep Schools really had it made...until I got to know a few of them well enough for them to share the truth of their families and their lives.

They did not face the kind of challenges I faced, but they did not experience their lives as free of the need to struggle, if only with themselves. I do not believe that there is anything salvific, anything saving about struggle or overcoming obstacles, not in any absolute sense. And I am a believer that too many human beings have been wrongly convinced that their sacrifice insured some more important end.

So today I offer you not broken heartedness, but open-heartedness in the words of spoken-word artist Ahlaam Abduljalil. She begins this piece recounting the time when a young girl whom she was tutoring called her beautiful. In phrase after phrase she describes all that she had to live through to know herself as beautiful:

“I want her (the young child) to know what it took to birth this freedom,
Because this beauty she sees I wasn’t born with
This light that shines was not placed inside of me



OPEN-HEARTED BEAUTY

BY REV. DR. BILL SINKFORD

I had to take [it] from the sun..."

There is such strength and confidence, such hard and simple truth in her phrasing that I found myself

believing that we might all come to see ourselves as beautiful...open-hearted and beautiful.

There is a sermon in there somewhere.

I hope you find what you need today in her words.

Rev. Bill Sinkford is the Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon. Previously he served as UUA President, and is a past steering committee member of DRUUMM and the African American UU Multicultural Ministries.



Continued from Page 1

admit that as months went on, I hadn't been finding a way to spend more one-on-one time with my father (even after I set that intention) because work had gotten so intense with the pandemic and I was doing the responsible thing by social distancing from my aging, high-risk parents. By October though, my wish had been granted as I became the 24/7 caregiver for my father.

And you might think this is where I start talking about gratitude, but here's the thing, in order for me to have all this time with my father, what had to happen was nothing less than: my father's stroke (of course...which I am not grateful for), the declining health of my mother-in-law (which forced us to move into a more accessible high rise), the sudden, unexpected death of my beloved dog which freed us to move anywhere singing about love...or observe a bug on the glass just being still...and some days (in the middle of the night especially) when my father has no idea where he is or how he got there, he looks to me and he says, "I'm so grateful that you are here with me" and I get to say back to him, "I'm so grateful that you are here with me."

And in those moments, I am fully alive.

We are working through a workbook called the "Story of My Life" where I ask him questions and write down his stories. I am hearing stories of his childhood in Hawai'i, of his Popo (Grandmother) taking him to the Chinese Temple, of the spirit money and incense they burned at the ancestral altar, and the oranges they left by the graveside.

He tells me of the one visit in his whole childhood to come to the mainland, which was when his mother dragged him to hot, dusty, dry Tulsa, Oklahoma for a healing from Oral Roberts. We speak of healing and how one knows when they've been healed. He tells me of becoming a father and finding out that he and my mother were expecting twins. He tells me stories of failures and successes. All of these are stories I'm hearing for the first time ever.

Sometimes the practice of gratitude is a naming what we are thankful for, but sometimes it is the work of opening our hearts to one another and to Life. What if gratitude is the practice of opening to joy, wonder, generosity, love?

"We do not have to die to enter the [realm] of Heaven. In fact we have to be fully alive."

In a world that sometimes tries to hold us back from our fullness, I wonder how you will come into your fullness today.

I wonder how this Spring and coming Easter season will find you more fully alive than ever

Pamela Wat is the Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington Delaware. Unitarian Universalist ministry is a second career for Rev. Wat. After receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in dance from Kutztown University in 1994, she moved to California to pursue a Master of Arts in Creative/Interdisciplinary Arts at San Francisco State University—a unique program aimed at using creative arts to promote social justice.

The Black UU SURVIVAL GUIDE

Ten Steps for Surviving as a Black Unitarian Universalist
and How Allies Can Keep It 100



Xolani Kacela, Ph.D.

Foreword by Dr. Janice Marie Johnson

Cover illustration by Kimber McLaughlin

AVAILABLE
AT
**Barnes &
Noble /
Amazon**

If you are a Black person struggling to find your way in a UU church or a non-Black person looking to align yourself with UU values of inclusion, equity, and multiculturalism, this book is for you. The Black UU Survival Guide offers you a Ten Step method for achieving your sense of belonging in UU communities.

The book illuminates vital strategies for claiming your place in Unitarian Universalism. Among the steps are: Knowing the Basics, Keeping an Open Mind, and Dealing with Race, Racism, and Other -Isms. This work will ground your spiritual practice and help eliminate the stresses of being a Black UU.

Foreword by Janice Marie Johnson. Endorsed by the Rev. Bill Sinkford, Jesse King, Lisa Bailey, and Kelie Ingram



DRUUMM VILLAGE AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

You are invited to take part in this year's virtual DRUUMM Village June 21-27 with the General Assembly gathering from June 23 - 27. No matter if you have registered for the main conference or not, DRUUMM programming is open to all Unitarian Universalists of Color where you will have the opportunity to grow in faith and community.

DEADLINE to register: June 19, 2021 (we need time to send out zoom links and sort people into caucus spaces, so please register by this deadline.)

DRUUMM Village Schedule will show on the online event page after registration.

DRUUMM GA Contact:

DRUUMM Assembly, Conference & Meetings Coordinator
Imari Kariotis
druummacmc@gmail.com

COLOR/FULL: UU KANSAS CITY 2018



**JESSE KING
EVERGREEN, COLORADO**

GOAL

To gracefully navigate GA, and to learn more about how I can bring about real change in our systems.

GIFT

Being a good student of change and leadership.

NOTATIONS

- Congratulations to DRUUMM members who are celebrating milestones in their ministry and religious professional life. This is the season of ordinations, congregational calls to ministry, credentialing, and graduation.
- The Members-only section DRUUMM website has been recently updated with a comprehensive list of caucuses and networks.
- Leaders with the Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian/Pacific Islander Caucuses of DRUUMM are meeting to explore ways to scale up community building and inform future programs.
- Regional virtual gatherings are being envisioned for Fall 2021.
- DRUUMM membership has grown to 385.



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The DRUUMM Beat Issue 21, Volume 2

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