



August 2018 Interfaith Center of New York Newsletter

Message from ICNY Executive Director

Dear Friends,

On July 26, the same day as the court-imposed deadline for returning over 2,000 children taken away from their parents by US Border Patrol as part of Trump's "zero tolerance" border policy, diverse faith leaders and supporters of the New Sanctuary Coalition gathered in New York City at 26 Federal Plaza with suitcases and testimonies addressing the question "[#WhatWouldYouPack?](#)"



This question has been asked of vulnerable Americans before. Recently, as a guest of Dr. Sam Cruz on his [WBAI show "Crossroads"](#), I discussed low points in our collective and ongoing struggle for a more perfect union: Japanese Americans

uprooted from their jobs and homes and forcibly relocated to desert concentration camps after Pearl Harbor; African slaves separated from their families on the auction block with little or nothing to pack. Dr. Cruz and I also identified the small signs of hope. No one spoke out against FDR's Executive Order 9066 back in 1942. In comparison, when the first Muslim Ban went into effect on January 26, 2017, citizens of all backgrounds rushed to the airports to prevent it going into effect.

On "Crossroads," I also described The Interfaith Center of New York's work to ensure religiously diverse leadership in coalitions supporting immigrant New Yorkers. For example, by inviting [Yemeni Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious leaders to support activists outside the Cayuga Shelter in East Harlem](#), ICNY helped to send the message that these children are not the exclusive concern of a single community or religious tradition. We must all do our part in protecting them.

For a slow summer month, August in NYC is full of interfaith activity. Check out the work of ICNY's [Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy](#) Fellows who are now embarking on independent projects. **Manbo Dòwòti Désir** will be holding forum discussions around the city on public religious institutions serving the city's African Diaspora faith communities (the Vodou, Santeria, Candomblé, and Yoruba-Lukumi traditions). Also, **Mika'il DeVeaux** will be hosting a symposium on the 13th Amendment and how it relates to reentry and incarceration today.

August 4th is the 5th anniversary of the **Oak Creek shooting at a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin**. The day will be honored with SEVA or "public service" throughout the Sikh community and around the country. A day later, the **25th Annual Interfaith Peace Gathering** commemorating the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will take place at Judson Memorial Church.

Finally, your voice is needed before August 7th. Attorney General Jeff Sessions is proposing to add a citizenship question to the 2020 US Census, which could dissuade non-citizens from filling out the Census. You can make a comment to the US Commerce Department [here](#) or [here](#).

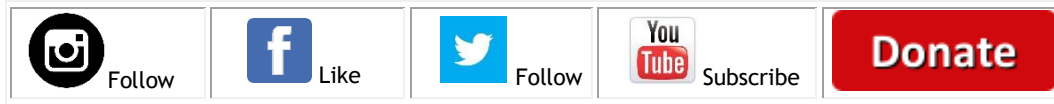
Best wishes,




The Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer
Executive Director
The Interfaith Center of New York

PS: Thank you for your interest in our monthly newsletter! Please take a moment to learn more about the Interfaith Center's work to overcome prejudice, violence,

and misunderstanding by visiting us at interfaithcenter.org or by clicking on one of the links below.



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Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy Events

In partnership with [Trinity Church Wall Street](#), ICNY's [Interfaith Civic Leadership Academy](#) is giving diverse religious leaders the tools they need to make a difference -- with an intensive ten-month training program to develop civic engagement skills, as well as a rich network of relationships with colleagues across faith lines. In the final phase of the academy, our fellows receive grant funding to create their own community-based projects, applying the skills and insights developed in the program to address a social justice issue that impacts their faith community or other New Yorkers.

ICNY is proud to share these upcoming ICLA events -- the products of our fellows' extraordinary work:



[Manbo Dòwòti Désir](#)



LAVE TÈT: STATE OF THE TRADITION

Diverse houses of worship may be found throughout New York, but there are currently no formally recognized, public religious institutions serving the city's African diaspora faith communities (such as Vodou, Santeria, Candomble, and the Yoruba-Lukumi tradition). This community dialogue will begin to envision what such a public ritual space might look like for African-based traditions. With tens of thousands of practitioners living in and visiting the New York metropolitan area, the need for securing a collective place of worship is an imperative that can no longer be ignored.

Thursday, August 16:

**The Politics of Vodou: Afrophobia; Human Rights; and the Sacred Waters of the AfroAtlantic Treaty Process
(session primarily in Haitian and French)**

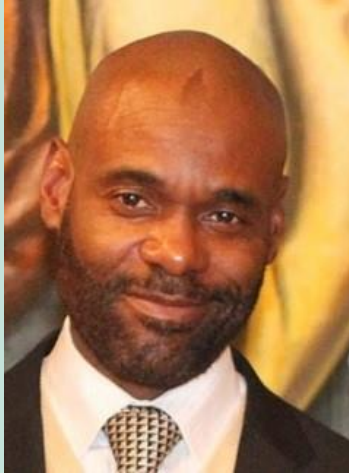
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

**Out of the Basement:
Opening a Temple for African-based Faiths (English)**

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Location: Caribbean Cultural Center - African Diaspora Institute, [104 East 125th Street](#) (between Lexington & Park Avenues).

Part of the African Vodoun Festival, these roundtables will be moderated by ICLA fellow and Director of the [AfroAtlantic Theologies & Treaties Institute](#), Manbo Dòwòti Désir. For more info text 917.539.7252, or email ddeisir@ATI-global.org. [A flyer for this event is available here.](#)



[Mika'il DeVeaux](#)

Amend the 13th:

A CONVERSATION WITH FAITH LEADERS ON ABOLISHING THE U.S. PRISON SYSTEM AS WE KNOW IT

Hyper-incarceration in the contemporary US has been aided and abetted by the "Punishments Clause" of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, leading to historic and ongoing violations of human and constitutional rights for Americans of all races, ethnicities, and classes. This symposium -- along with a larger conference scheduled for February 2019 at Columbia University -- will increase awareness, fuel public discourse, and galvanize momentum to amend the 13th Amendment.

Date: Thursday, August 16

Time: 9:30 am - 2:00 pm

Location: The Interchurch Center, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, Sockman Lounge

Please RSVP to Megan Cheah at mmc2237@columbia.edu, no later than Thursday, August 2nd.

Confirmed speakers include ICLA fellow and Director of Citizens Against Recidivism Mika'il DeVeaux, Flores Forbes, Imam Talib Abdur Rashid, and others. [A flyer for this event is available here.](#)



[Ken Sibanda Esq.](#)

BEYOND HOPE INITIATIVE

In prisons throughout the US, wrongfully convicted inmates have given up hope for a just resolution of their cases. Inspired by the ancient Jewish Great Sanhedrin, this project will convene an interfaith council of attorneys and religious leaders to visit prisons in the New York metropolitan area, offering lectures to prisoners on evidence and the appeal process in hopes of assisting on their cases. Please join us for this planning session on August 27th, and join the movement to offer hope beyond hope.

Date: Monday August 27

Time: 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm

Location: The Interchurch Center, [475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY](#), Dining Room ABC

Planning session will be moderated by ICLA fellow and attorney Ken Sibanda. [A flyer for this event is available here.](#)

ICNY Co-Sponsored & Featured Events

**25th Annual Interfaith Peace Gathering
Commemorating Hiroshima & Nagasaki Atomic Bombings**



Date: Sunday, August 5, 2018

Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Judson Memorial Church, [55 Washington Square Park S., New York, NY 10006](https://www.judsonmemorialchurch.org/)

Rev. Dr. T. K. Nakagaki, a Japanese Buddhist priest, Hiroshima Peace Ambassador, Peace Correspondent of Nagasaki, President and Founder of Heiwa Peace and Reconciliation Foundation of New York, former President of the Buddhist Council of New York and former Vice Chair of the Interfaith Center of New York, has organized this Annual Interfaith Peace Gathering in Manhattan since 1994. This commemorative ceremony will include local Buddhist, Shinto, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Native American religious leaders, along with musicians and choirs from Japan and the United States. All are welcome with free will donation.

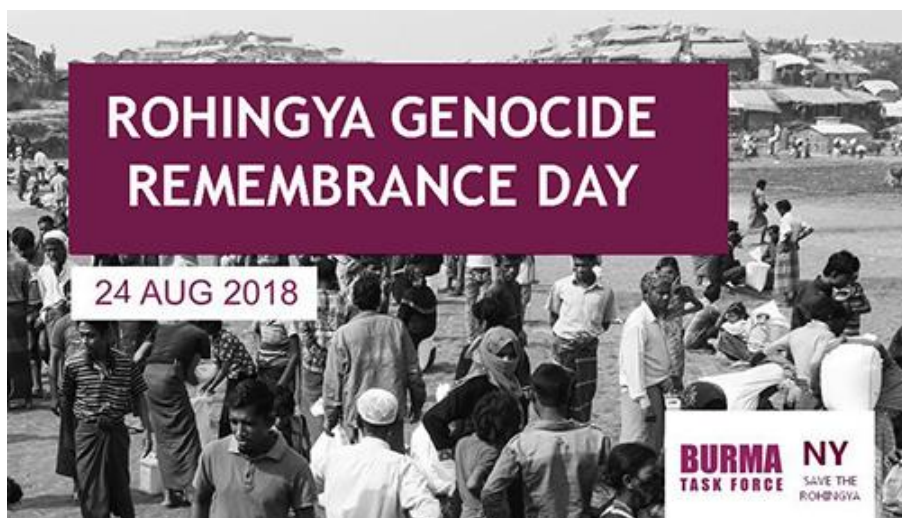
In the Name of God: The Story of Abraham in Monotheistic Traditions and a Celebration of Eid al-Adha



Date: Wednesday, August 22
Time: 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Location: LaGuardia Community College, [31-10 Thomson Ave E., Building Atrium, Long Island City, NY 11101](#)


LaGuardia Community College, the Interfaith Center of NY and GAMA NY (Gathering All Muslim Artists, The New York Chapter) are joining together for an interfaith dialogue and art exhibition exploring the sacrifice of Abraham or Ibrahim from the perspective of the three Abrahamic traditions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The dialogue will feature a range of leaders from across the NYC faith-based communities. Please RSVP by sending Hanadi an email at Hanadi@interfaithcenter.org. If you are an artist and would like to participate in this event, [please submit your information here](#).

One Year Anniversary Rohingya Displacement & Genocide



Date: Friday, August 24
Time: 3:00 pm - 6:30 pm
Location: UN Permanent Mission of Burma, [10 E 77th St, New York, New York 10075](#)

This vigil and rally mark the one-year anniversary of the forced displacement of the Rohingya Minority, persecuted in Myanmar/Burma and subject to mass rapes and other atrocities. We anticipate there will be an interfaith feeder march from 96th Street Islamic Center starting at 2 pm and proceeding via Jewish congregations nearby. [The Facebook page for this event is here](#). This Vigil is co-sponsored by Burma Task Force, Interfaith Center of NY, and Jewish Alliance of Concern Over Burma.

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Other Events & Resources

If you have an upcoming event that you think ICNY's audience might like to know about, please notify us by [filling out this event form](#). We have final discretion about what events are included in the Newsletter. Please note that a listing here does not imply ICNY endorsement.

2018 NYC Day of Seva (Public Service) in remembrance of the Oak Creek Tragedy



DAY OF SEVA 2018

Join the **Sikh Coalition** and **your local sangat** in commemorating the **6th anniversary** of the shooting in Oak Creek through **seva** [selfless service]

Date: Saturday, August 4

Time: 10:00 am - 1:30 pm

Location: Morningside Park (meet at W. 112th Street and Morningside Avenue)

On August 4, 2018, the New York City sangat will join the many cities participating in National Day of Seva (selfless community service) to remember and honor the victims and survivors of the Oak Creek tragedy. Please bring work gloves (we will have a limited supply available). You are encouraged to bring water, sunscreen and sun protection. Volunteers should wear their Day of Seva t-shirts from years past. There will be a limited number of t-shirts available on a first-come-first-serve basis. If you have any additional questions, please email dayofseva@sikhcoalition.org. [More info & registration here](#).

6th Aarti Hindu Lamp Ceremony

on the East River



Date: Saturday, August 4

Time: 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Pebble Beach at Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn, NY 11201

The Aarti ceremony is traditionally performed each morning and evening along India's rivers, to convey gratitude to mother river, reflect on our community and remember our loved ones. Please join us as we decorate palm leaf lamps and release them along the East River and pay our respect. Audience members are also invited to bring a small hand drum/percussion and join traditional drummer Paulam Mistry to accompany the ceremony with traditional rhythms. Guest artists will also present their work. The ceremony is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and is sponsored in part by the Greater New York Arts Development Fund of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, administered by the Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC). [A flyer for this event is available here.](#)

The Cardinal: A Journey Through Queens

Cornerstone Theater Company presents

The Cardinal

Written by Cusi Cram

Directed by Juliette Carrillo

Dates & Times:

Friday, August 10, 2018- 8:00pm

Saturday, August 11, 2018- 2:00pm Matinee

Saturday, August 11, 2018- 8:00pm

Location: Kupferberg Center for the Arts: Goldstein Theater, [65-30 Kissena Blvd, Flushing, NY 11367](#)

This world premier play features local residents, original music, and a spectacular shadow puppet portrayal of the urban landscape of Queens. Tickets are pay-what-you-can (suggested donation \$10). Tickets can be reserved online or at 1-800-578-1335. [Get tickets here.](#)

NYC: Unveil Your Sacred Truth through the Kalachakra Path



Date: August 16-18

Time: 16-17 (7-9 pm); 18- 19 (10am -5pm)

Location: [151 W 30th St, Fl 4th, New York, New York 10001](#)

Tibetan Buddhist Kalachakra Master from the Jonang tradition, Shar Khentrul Rinpoche Jamphel Lodro will give lectures on The Hidden Meaning of Shambhala, as a means to reach perfection of peace and harmony. He will also give Teachings on the Profound Path of Kalachakra. Rinpoche has been awarded the title of "Master of all Traditions" by the Dalai Lama. Cost \$140 all week-end August 16-19 (Thurs-Sunday). [Register here](#). More info: 916.612.5784 or ny@rimekalachakra.org.

Taking on the Doctrine of Discovery, What are our Next Steps?



Date: August 18-19

Times: 9:00am-5:00pm on Saturday (with a banquet 6:00pm-9:00pm) and 9:00am-1:00pm on Sunday

Location: [Skä·noñh—Great Law of Peace Center, Liverpool NY](#) in Onondaga Nation Territory

Tickets: \$100 per person

This event is organized and sponsored by the [Indigenous Values Initiative](#). In 2014, before the Skä·noñh—Great Law of Peace Center had officially opened, we held a first conference titled “The Doctrine of Discovery: After Repudiation, What Next?” About 40 delegates from different faith traditions attended. This year’s conference builds on the 2014 meeting. The Skä·noñh Center is now open and it is a good context from which to draw the values of the Haudenosaunee to affect positive change.

As with the previous meeting, we will first learn about the devastating impacts of the Doctrine of Discovery first hand from the Haudenosaunee, to understand its history, and then to share strategies for addressing this 500+ year-old ongoing human rights violation. Then we will hear from one another and the ways in which religious and faith communities are pushing back against the Doctrine of Discovery. There will be a traditional foods banquet on the evening of Saturday the 18th followed by screening of the film “*Spirit Game: Pride of a Nation*” and panel discussion. [Get more info & register here.](#)

7th ARISE NY! Anti-Bullying Interfaith Youth Summit



Date: Saturday, August 18

Time: 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Location: Thoughtworks, Inc., [99 Madison Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10016](#)

Turning Point for Women and Families' 7th ARISE NY! Anti-Bullying Interfaith Youth Summit is a free, full-day summit dedicated to youth (ages 13-20) to help

stomp out bullying, hate crimes, and combat Islamophobia. Our goal is to heighten awareness about bullying, stereotyping, and hate crimes targeting teenagers and to equip them with the tools they need to prevent bullying and promote peaceful coexistence between all. Each individual who participates in the entire day's activities will receive a certificate of completion. Some schools offer community service credit for participation in the Summit. Lunch will be served and metrocards will be provided for youth who need them. Register by emailing Youth Coordinator Tazmin Uddin at thuddin@tpny.org with the name, age, and school of the participant by August 10, 2018. [The Facebook page for this event is here.](#)

Interfaith Forum: Reduce Mass Incarceration



Date: Thursday, August 23

Time: Doors open 6:30 pm; Forum 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Location: First Presbyterian Church of Forrest Hills, [70-35 112th St., Forrest Hills, NY 11375](#) (E,F,M,R trains to Forest Hills-71st)

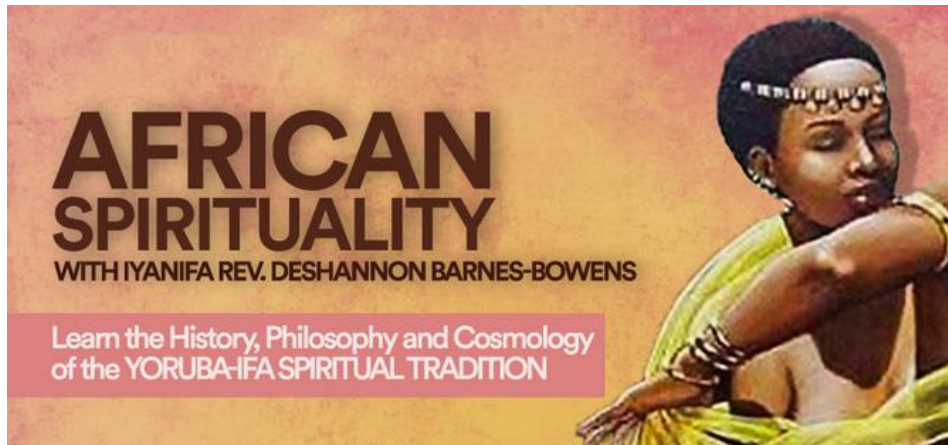
At this Forum, we will discuss the moral imperative to closing Rikers Island Jails and reimagining a humane approach in smaller borough-based justice centers. The Forum will include:

- Presentation by a representative of The Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform (the Lipmann Commission) about the plan to close Rikers and move to borough-based justice centers.
- A panel of faith leaders will discuss the moral imperative of closing Rikers and moving to a more humane, fair and non-racist approach.

- Open discussion from the floor, enabling attendees to have their voice heard as to why and how this should be accomplished.

[The Facebook page for this event is here.](#)

Open Heart Conversations: African Spirituality



Date: Sunday, August 26

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: The United Palace, [4140 Broadway, New York, NY, 10033](#)

Join us for an Open Heart Conversation to learn about the Yoruba-Ifa tradition with initiated priestess and Interfaith Minister, Iyanifa Rev. DeShannon Barnes-Bowens. Awaken to the beauty of the ancient Yoruba-Ifa wisdom tradition with initiated priestess and Interfaith Minister, Iyanifa Rev. DeShannon Barnes-Bowens. Explore the history, philosophy, cosmology and why many people are re-discovering African spirituality. During this Open Heart Conversation we will ask: Who are the Yoruba? What are their beliefs and practices? How have they influenced the modern world? Join us on August 26th to answer these questions and more. [Click here for more info & to RSVP.](#)

My Faith/Your Faith Teen Fellowship

My Faith/Your Faith

Accepting nominations now for 2018 - 2019 fellowship!

Date: Friday, August 31

Time: 1 Sunday a month

Location: Varies

My Faith/Your Faith is accepting applications for its 2018 - 2019 fellowship. My Faith/Your Faith fellows participate in nine to ten social justice/interfaith education programs. Over the course of the programs teens will learn about different faith traditions in New York City, and draw on their diverse traditions to advance social justice in their community.

The first event will be Sunday, September 30th. Applications are open now and accepted on a rolling deadline. [Apply here](#). [Click/Tap here for more information](#) or e-mail Ruben Brosbe at rubenbrosbe@gmail.com.

Women in Faith Fellowship



Date: Monthly on Wednesdays, starting September 26th

Time: 6:30-8:30 pm

Location: [225 West 34th Street, Suite 1607, New York, NY 10122](#)

Are you a professional woman committed to her faith tradition or engaged in a spiritual practice? Or do you know someone who is? Then check out the Women in Faith Fellowship, now recruiting for the 2018-2019 Cohort.

Women in Faith, through ten monthly evening sessions and a half-day retreat, brings together professional women of different faiths and spiritual practices to understand other faiths and deepen their own, build relationships across cultural boundaries, and impact their communities. [Click here for info & to download an application](#).

Parliament of the World's Religions



Dates: November 1 - 7, 2018


Location: The Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Canada

The Parliament of the World's Religions was created to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement with the world and its guiding institutions in order to achieve a just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

The theme of the 2018 Parliament is "The Promise of Inclusion, The Power of Love: Pursuing Global Understanding, Reconciliation, and Change." More than 10,000 people will participate in the Parliament, which will last for seven days and comprise more than 500 programs, workshops, and dialogues, alongside music, dance, art and photography exhibitions, and related events presented by the world's religious communities and cultural institutions.

Speakers will include His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, Dr. Karen Armstrong, Cardinal Thomas Collins, and many more.

[More info and ticketing information are available here.](#)

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ADL Calendar of Observances

The complete ADL Calendar of Observances for 2018 is available [here](#).

August 2018

August 9

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Celebrates the richness of indigenous cultures and recognizes the challenges indigenous peoples face today, ranging from poverty and disease to dispossession, discrimination and denial of basic human rights.

August 12

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

Celebrates young people and the integral role they play in helping to create a world fit for children.

August 22–25

EID AL-ADHA • Islamic

The "Feast of Sacrifice" concludes the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca), and is a three-day festival recalling Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.

August 23

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND ITS ABOLITION

Memorializes the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade, coinciding with the anniversary of the uprising in Santo Domingo (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic) that initiated its abolition.

August 25


ULLAMBANA (also known as Obon) • Buddhist

Ullambana, a Sanskrit term that means "hanging upside down and suffering," honors the spirits of past ancestors and strives to relieve aching souls from suffering. It lasts about half of the month of August. Obon, the Japanese transliteration of Ullambana, is only three days and varies from region to region—July in the eastern region and August in the western region.

August 26

RAKSHA BANDHAN • Hindu

Also called *Rakhi*, this festival celebrates the protective relationship between brothers and their sisters.

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Ways to Support and Promote ICNY:

