

How GA Changed Me

From Dottie

When I joined PUUC in 2019 I knew how to become an active member of a UU congregation. Serving as a delegate to the UUA General Assembly (GA) has opened my eyes to our denomination's role as a faith leader. I learned that I - and we - are part of something larger than our individual congregation, something worth engaging with and supporting.

It is clear from being at GA that UUs are a diverse group in terms of appearance, racial/ethnic background, ability, gender identities, social class, age, and more. By listening carefully to this diversity of people, with diverse opinions and perspectives, I gained new insights on topics such as accessibility, governance, land acknowledgements, multi-platform ministry. I learned from congregations who are thinking outside the proverbial box about Sunday mornings and involving families. I listened to thoughtful debate on resolutions, bylaw changes, Actions of Immediate Witness, and changed my views on some issues. I urge you to consider becoming a delegate in future years. It is invigorating to understand more about and become part of our national movement. Plus you might just grow, learn, and change your own mind!

From Steve

Perhaps the most inspiring thing I've taken from this year's GA is a better understanding of younger UUs. My concern that younger generations had become too sensitive and fragile to be resilient enough to effectively defend progressive values in an increasingly unruly political landscape was put to rest.

I learned two things about these folks, as they were represented at GA, they bring with them a new generation of our language and they practice resilience collectively. English has always been an evolving language, I just wasn't paying close enough attention to see how much it's changed for people 40 years younger than I. Once I accepted that, I was able to stop

listening for the stylistic differences between us and start listening to what they meant. As discussions on sensitive issues got more heated, feelings were hurt. The young people didn't shrink from confrontation, they stood their ground, but they didn't do it in an individualistic way. They collaborate in real time, stepping in for one another, handing off the conversational baton, nurturing one another, and then taking their turn again. The kids are alright!

From Mary

I was a 2024 PUUC delegate to General Assembly because I thought I “should”, having served on the Governing Board for 5 years. I have an inherent and outspoken belief in the importance of the “bigger” responsibility and opportunity for our UU denomination, through the UUA, to positively influence our nation and our world, now and in the future. After investing many days in preparing and participating, the “should” became irrelevant and the value of Unitarian Universalism grew exponentially. For the first time, I felt like a UU, not only a PUUC member.

There were 2500 virtual registrants, and at any point in time hundreds were engaged in learning from each other, listening to wise leaders, engaging in debate about a range of issues. We will share more about these issues in subsequent Cresset columns. I felt overwhelmingly grateful and proud to vote for prioritizing UU leadership at all levels of society, including at PUUC, to advocate for transgender rights, and most of all for the revised UU statements of our beliefs and principles, Article II, to be grounded in the most important value of all, Love. I feel very proud and grateful for being a member of the UU denomination in ways I could not imagine. Thank you for giving me the gift of being your GA delegate.

ORIGINAL VERSION from MARY

Save some content for Lessons Learned at end of series

How GA transformed Me

I was a 2024 PUUC delegate to General Assembly because I thought I “should” having served on the Governing Board for 5 years, my inherent and outspoken belief in the importance of the “bigger” responsibility and opportunity for our UU denomination through UUA to positively influence our nation and our world especially now and in the future. After investing many days preparing and participating, the “should” became irrelevant and the value of Unitarian Universalism grew exponentially. For the first time, I felt like a UU not only a PUUC member.. There were 2500 virtual registrants and at any point in time hundreds were engaged in learning from each other in enlightening workshops, listening to wise leaders present clear and provocative thought about embracing inclusion because of Love of all those who don’t sit at Sunday worship, to engage in debate about the importance or not of UU leadership right now regarding both Palestinians and Jews, the impact of climate change. on marginalized people and the need for ongoing support of PUUC congregants in the continuing impact of Covid, I felt overwhelming, grateful and proud to vote for prioritizing UU leadership at all levels of society including at PUUC for transgender rights and most of all the final year of revising the UU statements of our beliefs and principles, Article II to be grounded in the most important of all, Love. I witnessed and felt ever present and overwhelming love and acceptance of each and every GA delegate by each and every UU leader who guided us. They were there at every moment to lovingly and respectfully support our expressing our differing opinions and actively engaged when

behavioral covenants were broken or untruths spoken. They showed their professionalism and more so their humanness. They demonstrated why Love is and should be the center o

of all of our work now and in the future. I now in my heart and soul and head understand why Article II needed to be rewritten to be as focused and clear and usable as possible for all. I feel very proud and grateful for being a member of the UU denomination in ways I could not imagine. Thank you for giving me the gift of being your GA delegate.