

## **Statements From Previous UUA General Assembly Delegates**

### **Barb Dutchak**

So far I've only been to two GAs in person, and one virtually, and am deeply grateful for every one of the experiences. Although there was a supercharged intensity and transformational energy in being on the ground at GA, it was also exhausting, sometimes overwhelming and not inexpensive. The virtual experience lessened the physical demands of travel and tramping from session to session in a huge convention space, which considerably reduced the overwhelm and exhaustion, while it still provided inspiring experiences, access to phenomenal speakers, exhilarating interactions, powerful music, creative and expansive worship, and exciting opportunities to connect with our larger faith community in action. While I look forward to being able to attend in person again at some point, I'm very much looking forward to being back at GA virtually this year after having to take a break due to both finances and mobility issues.

Serving as a delegate was an eye-opening insight into the messy, maddening, demanding, sometimes plodding, unexpectedly complicated, and always committed and passionate process of honoring all our covenantal principles and particularly that of democratic process in the effort to live into our faith and answer its call to action.

### **Ann Wood**

I found the virtual UUA General Assembly in June of last year to be eye-opening, inspiring and occasionally frustrating, and well worth the five days I spent tuned into it as a delegate from UUCF.

This impressive event, staged virtually at the last minute, opened my eyes to so much that is evolving in our denomination, though speakers and presentations, workshops, services, music and business sessions.

I found it inspiring to meet UU leaders from around the country, and hear what they have to say, and where they see our denomination going. I enjoyed several nationally recognized speakers. As a UUCF delegate, I made my own decisions in voting and giving my input. Occasionally, I was frustrated when the procedures blocked an amendment or curtailed a discussion.

All in all, it was an enriching and forward-looking experience for me, as previous GA's have been. I would encourage any member who is curious about our denomination to give it a try.

### **Stacy Casey**

My first General Assembly (GA) was in 2019 - the first all-virtual assembly. I had wanted to participate in previous years, but found it challenging to take that much time off work,

especially considering I would have had to budget extra time for travel to and from the host city. So being able to attend virtually, and mostly at night, was a great introduction to the experience.

Obviously, as we all know by now, virtual meetings do not measure up to in-person. I'm sure I missed out on the exhilaration of in-person worship services, and rooms filled with laughter, swaying music, and hugs. But what I did get out of it, as a newcomer to GA, was:

- **A connection to Unitarian Universalist (UU) members from throughout the country.** Knowing there were literally hundreds and hundreds of kindred spirits actively participating in the events gave me a stronger feeling of UU community.
- **A connection to UU values.** Through the events, chat rooms, and breakout sessions, I came to a deeper understanding of our common beliefs, and also - just as important - some of the many "shades of gray" in those beliefs.
- **A connection to UU's history and future.** As part of a virtual assembly, I could see both the "typical administrative structure" that GA's used to be ... but also the "new and changing world" that GA's were trying to reflect & become. It felt like being part of a bridge, an exciting time to experience a changing Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) environment.

I recommend this experience to anyone who wants to get a bigger picture of the UUA, and to feel connected to UUs out in the greater world. Feel free to ask me if you have any questions or want to know more!