



General Assembly
Planning Committee

Creating Community -- Deepening Connections -- Nourishing Dreams

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees
January 6-9, 2011 Meeting of the GAPC in Phoenix, AZ

Friday, January 7, 2011 – *beyond “business as usual” meeting with AZ Congregations*

The General Assembly Planning Committee (GAPC) met in Phoenix January 6-9, 2011. Eva Marx, Board liaison, was unable to attend. The GAPC schedules its January meeting in the subsequent year’s site and invites congregation ministers and lay leaders to meet with them to get to know one another and begin thinking about the following year’s GA.

This year more than the customary time was allotted for a “Beyond ‘business as usual’ meeting” with the Arizona congregations. More than 20 people attended, representing eight congregations and the Pacific Southwest District. See Appendix for a listing of guests, the questions that were elicited in a brainstorming session, and participants’ reflections at the end of the meeting, as captured on newsprint.

President Peter Morales joined the group briefly by telephone and Eva Marx and Jackie Shanti listened by phone to the final reflections.

In the meeting with the Arizona congregation representatives, Lynda Shannon, GAPC chair, covered the **basic timetable the GAPC follows**, emphasizing that the Committee was in Phoenix to work on GA 2011 in Charlotte. **Planning for GA 2012 will begin following GA 2011**, first with a GAPC Exec Meeting over the summer, then a meeting of the General Assembly and Mission of the Association Partnership (GAMAP), the GRID meeting, and the GAPC big meeting in September where portfolio assignments are decided and a broad outline of the upcoming GA is sketched.

GRID Meeting September 14, 2011 – the schedule is laid out
Program Proposal Application deadline – November 1, 2011
Year Out site PC Exec Meeting - January 2012 in Louisville
April 2012 – pre-site GAPC Meeting in Phoenix
June 2012 – General Assembly

GAMAP is the acronym for General Assembly and Mission of the Association Partnership – convened by the President of the UUA that has representation from the Board, Administration, Planning Committee and the Director of the GACS office.

GAMAP meets each September before the major GAPC Planning Meeting to establish a shared vision for each GA and to address other GA-related issues that are important to all three entities. GAMAP met September 14, 2010 with an outside consultant from the Alban Institute and agreed upon the following:

A Statement of Purpose for GA 2012:

The UUA will offer a General Assembly in 2012, which transform individual and congregational capacity for effective public witness and influence on issues of justice.

As we gather in nonviolent protest with a focus on public witness and social action, we are committed to:

- *Identify outcomes in collaboration with our internal and external partners.*
- *Provide opportunities for participation by individuals of differing abilities and people with historically marginalized identities [including youth and young adults].*
- *Use General Assembly 2011 in Charlotte, North Carolina, to begin preparation.*

The Internal Accountability Groups Question:

GAMAP participants brainstormed a list of accountability groups including but not limited to DRUUMM, Interweave, LUUNA, TRUUST, and ARE among others.

It was noted that the GAPC has contacted individuals from many of these groups to address any issues or concerns they might have about GA programming, scheduling, or events in general, and have been making extra effort to make sure they are more aware of how we are working and what we are planning. At the request of the Cross Cultural Engagement Task Force, to the extent possible, all scripts presented in Plenary Hall are reviewed by a team trained to look for AR/AO/MC concerns.

The proposal on the table at GAMAP was for the Board to contact the groups and ask them for their contact and alternate and then, after the October UUA Board meeting, this group would be turned over to the GAPC.

Roles and Responsibilities -- Who gets to decide? As agreed upon at GAMAP

- **GAPC:** plan General Assembly including where to meet/select worship leaders (except SLT and Sunday morning) /approve programs (vetted by the Program Development Group)/propose a GA budget, approve the schedule (GRID)/arrange for all support services.
- **UUA Board:** approves site selection and budget proposed by GAPC. Conducts the business of the Association in mini-assemblies and in plenary sessions.
- **Office of the President/UUA Administration:** President is spokesperson for the UUA; directs appropriate staff groups to plan and manage public witness event at GA. President selects worship leaders for SLT and Sunday morning. Collaborates with GAPC in selecting the Ware Lecturer.

Friday evening. The GAPC held a Deep Chair conversation in Lynda's suite on Friday night. The planned topic was GA 2012 but, because the CAPC felt enough had been said in the morning session, the conversation focused on concerns about relationships between the GAPC and other elected entities in the UUA, especially the CSW and the UUA Board and Moderator. No minutes were taken of this conversation.

Saturday. The GAPC toured the convention center, followed by a debrief which observed that this is a really wonderful “green” convention center with some excellent spaces for a variety of configurations for GA 2012.

The GAPC in the UU- Universe: Eva Marx and Jackie Shanti joined the GAPC by telephone on Saturday afternoon. This was not so much a conversation among members of the GAPC as a recap of Friday night’s Deep Chair conversation which lifted up some tender and troubling concerns about the GAPC’s relationships with other groups, especially the Board. Key concerns were:

1. The process and final product of **the Business Resolution on GA 2012;**
2. **The appointment of the GA 2012 Advisory Group** and its charge and first meeting with the Board and not the GAPC. This is not our understanding of what was agreed to at GAMAP.
3. **The failure of the hoped for collaborative process to review AIWs** and report back to the Board. The GAPC’s concerns about the AIW process were essentially left out of the interim report presented by the Chair of the CSW at the November Board Meeting;
4. **The use of fear based language in connection with GA 2012** – especially concerning the Offsite Delegate Voting project, which the GAPC supports for reasons of economic accessibility.
5. A reflection that the **Statement of Purpose adopted by GAMAP no longer seems right**, especially following the most excellent conversation of Friday morning with the AZ folks.

The sense of the GAPC is that there has been inadequate communication with the UUA Board and the Moderator and this has contributed to the GAPC’s feeling unsure about mutual trust. Clarification and shared understanding of our respective roles in planning GA is needed. To address this, the GAPC will be sending representatives to all Board meetings and hopes to meet with the Board immediately after the close of GA 2011 to begin to work to improve the relational aspects of our shared work, dreams and vision.

Sunday. Following worship led by Walt Wieder, the following motions were voted:

Motion 1: Report of the Offsite Delegate Planning Team

The General Assembly Planning Committee has received the report of the Offsite Delegate Planning Team with gratitude for the substantial work involved and with the understanding that any offsite delegate plan is designed to promote economic accessibility to General Assembly in the long run and to be economically sustainable within the operating budget.

Motion 2: Approval of Service Project

The General Assembly Planning Committee approves the choice of Service Project for General Assembly 2011 by the Charlotte congregations – namely: endowing the youth camp (“In Our Own Backyard”) and the Youth Council of Mecklenburg Ministries.

Motion 3: Funding for Attendance of the ARE Conference

Moved to supply the funding for Bart Frost to attend the ARE Conference in Ft. Myers, Florida in March.

Motion 4: Support for the A/V Kiosk at General Assembly 2011

Moved to allocate up to \$10,000 in support from the General Assembly budget for contracting an AV company to provide a digital recording booth for the 50th Anniversary Exhibit Hall.

Motion 5: Statement of Purpose Adopted at GAMAP 9/14/10

After further reflection, our gathering with Arizona congregational leaders, and the events of Tucson, the General Assembly Planning Committee moves that the language adopted by participants of GAMAP on September 14, 2010 be modified to read *“We gather in religious witness, with a focus on public witness, social action, and reflection together centered on our religiously grounded call to act for justice.”*

Accepted unanimously. Action: Lynda to communicate to the Administration and the Board.

A Resolution to Ourselves:

Because we believe that General Assemblies have the power to change lives and strengthen our congregations, we expect of ourselves and desire that other leaders join us in setting aside fear based language that would make anyone feel reluctant to attend any GA.

In all things, but especially in terms of GA 2012, we, the GA Planning Committee, commit ourselves to leave aside language that is fear based, assume good intentions on the part of all stakeholders and attempt to model generosity of spirit.

**Report Prepared by Lynda Shannon, Chair
General Assembly Planning Committee**

1/13/11

APPENDIX

1. List of Attendees

District Coordinator for GA 2012

Carolyn Saunders from the Tucson congregation

Pacific Southwest District

Rev. Ken Brown, District Executive

Tera Little, Lifespan RE Director

UU Church of Phoenix

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Paula Kulina, Congregation President

Jimmy Leung, Congregation Vice President

Sandra Weir, UUCP Immigration Task Force

Sun Principe, UUCP Social Justice Director

Heidi Parmenter, Congregation Administrator

Valley UU Church, Chandler, AZ

Rev. Gary Gallun

Kellie Walker, Director of Music Ministries

Marci Beaudoin, Director Lifespan RE

Carolina Krawarik, Lay leader Immigration/Social Justice

UU Church of Tucson

Rev. Diane Dowgiert

UU Congregation of Green Valley,

Rev. Bill Haney

Lou Prince, Director of Music

UU Church of Northwest Tucson

Rev. Susan Manker-Seale (recently resigned)

UU Church of Southeast Arizona, Sierra Vista

Rev. Rod Richards

Sharon Douglas, Director of Music

Prescott UU Fellowship

Rev. Paul Langston-Daley

UU Church, Surprise, AZ

Rev. Dr. Walt Wieder, Minister

Rev. Terrance Sims, Minister

Rev. Dr. Earl Holt, III Sun Lakes, AZ Emeritus First U of St. Louis

- 1. List of Topics (brainstorm) to Cover Today** [transcribed from newsprint]
 - a. How will GA in 2012 be different?
 - b. What does it mean to have a “justice GA?”
 - c. What is the role of local congregations in GA 2012?
 - d. How does a GA get put together? Who’s who and what’s what?
 - e. What special things does a district bring to GA?
 - f. How can we build relationships?
 - g. What is the Timeline for planning a GA?
 - h. What is the GAPC commitment to local partners?
 - i. How can local congregations help make GA different/frame conversation about justice?
 - j. Roles and responsibilities of UUA Board, UUA Administration, GAPC and this new special task force [GA 2012 Advisory Group]
 - k. What is our responsibility to various constituencies – diverse groups?
 - l. How do we address differences of opinion within our congregations on whether GA should be held in Phoenix?
 - m. How do we address all the justice concerns?
 - n. How do we guarantee congregations go home from GA 2012 with information they need - internal and external relevancy?
 - o. Grounding social justice work in theology
 - p. Enrich everyone’s appreciation of this corner of UU-hood
 - q. What would constitute “success” at public witness and service project?
 - r. What is the process for including local and PSW district congregations in Public Witness decision-making? [ask Pres. Morales]
 - s. Social witness and theology [discuss with Pres. Morales]
 - t. How do we empower people who have a real passion around the immigration issue? [Morales]

How do we get people to come to GA 2012?

- 2. Reflections on today’s Meeting with the GAPC** [transcribed from newsprint]
 - a. We need to continue this conversation at GA 2011
 - b. Feeling very positive about a justice GA actually focused on justice and not just on immigration;
 - c. GAPC really listening – exciting to think about jettisoning the GRID
 - d. The PSWD ready to promote GA 2012 beginning at GA in Charlotte
 - e. Focus on how we do social justice grounded in our faith
 - f. Immigration primary among justice topics but not all that is there
 - g. Gratitude toward planners especially learning about the process
 - h. GAPC intentionally being helpful

Prepared by Lynda Shannon