

GA 2024 and Beyond – Alternating Multiplatform and Virtual GA

Concept Outline – August 2022 DRAFT

Why do we need to change anything?

- For decades, UUA leaders have had conversations about the cost of GA, the desire to expand accessibility and participation in our democratic process and largest gathering of UUUs, the climate impacts of GA travel, and the potential for an every-other-year GA.
- The COVID pandemic forced us to rethink and explore new models, giving us an opportunity to build on what we've learned.
- The UUA was charged by the COIC to explore every-other-year GA, to be more accessible.
- We still realize we need to do core business each year, including elections, social justice statements, and rituals and affirmations that hold the center of gravity for our faith community. We also recognize GA is a key opportunity for the UUA and other related organizations to connect with constituents.
- It is time to combine our experience with multiplatform and virtual GAs to create a more accessible and dynamic paradigm for GA's going forward.

Why multiplatform? Why virtual? Why both?

- The past three years of multiplatform and virtual GAs have all been well-reviewed in post-event surveys of participants. They have also been well-attended, with the two virtual GAs being some of our highest attended GA events ever.
- Multiplatform GA 2022 was more accessible than previous in-person GAs, with more online than onsite registrations.
- Alternating years allows the two types of events to reinforce one another:
 - Multiplatform allows for great accessibility and larger participation along with the opportunity to gather in-person for those who are able and desire to do so.
 - Virtual GA allows for the greatest reach and most equitable and inclusive participation.
- Logistically, alternating years makes sense. The cost and impact of travel is rising, so this allows people to save up for onsite attendance over two years. Multiplatform GA also requires more support and expense from the UUA and related organizations, so this allows them to recoup some of that capacity in Virtual GA years.

A/B Biennial General Assembly Structure Proposal

GA would continue as the largest annual convening of Unitarian Universalists. However, the framework for the event will shift, alternating years of multiplatform and virtual events. Every year offers a core GA, with the scope of additional opportunities and features depending on the venue or style of event. Year A is multiplatform, and Year B is a virtual GA. This could start with GA 2023 as multiplatform, with GA 2024 as virtual, and GA 2025 back to multiplatform, etc. This would align with Presidential elections being held during multiplatform GAs.

Year A: Multiplatform GA

Single large host site where all live production takes place (e.g. convention center). All functions are multiplatform, with high production values on the main stage. Voting on business items would continue as online ballots through the delegate portal. Participants can join individually onsite or online, similar to GA 2022 and GA 2023 .

Year B: Virtual GA

All production of core GA functions is virtual, similar to GA 2020 and 2021. Voting on business items would continue as online ballots through the delegate portal. Individual registration would include access to GA programs and the GA app.

Note that the length of GA should be carefully considered for both virtual and multiplatform years. Virtually attendees have consistently provided the feedback that the traditional five-day model (Wednesday-Sunday) is too long to be online all day.

We Want to Hear from You

Within this framework, there is the opportunity for creativity and further development including within congregations, Regions, and clusters. There are also a host of additional details. However, at this stage this proposal is meant to outline a basic framework for shifting General Assembly to an alternating schedule rotating between multiplatform and virtual.

We welcome your feedback, appreciations, and concerns about this basic approach.