

Process Observation: Closing Summary, General Assembly 2026

Now that General Assembly (GA) 2026 has concluded, we want to offer a few written reflections as your process observation team, drawing together what we observed across the five General Sessions and what participants shared with us through the process observation survey.

Our Observations

On the whole, the General Sessions were conducted in keeping with our established procedures and our [GA Participation Covenant](#). Business generally occurred within the time allotted, and the discussion of business items proceeded with a fair balance of pro and con voices and was consistent with the agreed-upon procedures and covenanted agreements.

The defining feature of this year's GA was the experiment with compressed business timeframes, which front-loaded all General Sessions into a Sunday through Tuesday window. This created real pressure around the voting process, particularly the time delegates had to access their credentials and cast ballots. Additionally, there was unclear and, in some cases, erroneous communication about business timeframes, including the deadline for submission of Responsive Resolutions. The clearest operational learning we are carrying forward is the need for clear, accurate communication of deadlines and for a session cadence that leaves adequate time for voting.

We also observed, across sessions, the ongoing tension between honoring procedure and centering relationship. Our current Bylaws and Rules sometimes constrain what we most wish to do together (for example, amending an Action of Immediate Witness), and that tension surfaced repeatedly in the business before us. It points directly to the importance of the Bylaws Renewal work still ahead. One observation falls outside the formal business of GA. The programmatic sessions on Saturday carried no business for us to report on, but we observed several instances in which closed captioning, ASL interpretation, or both were not available for a period of time. Reliable access to captioning and interpretation is essential to full and equitable participation, and we flag it here for attention in future planning.

Survey Results

This was the first year we invited delegates to record their own process reflections in real time, and the response was generous. We received 162 responses across the five business sessions, and the overall picture is encouraging. The strongest results were relational: 87.7% of respondents affirmed that our covenanted agreements were honored, and 81.9% felt that conflict and disagreement were handled respectfully. Both held steady across every session, which tells us our community cared for one another even when the process strained.

Where the feedback was more mixed, it pointed at process and access rather than relationship. Fairness drew the most reservation overall, at 61.6% positive, and it was the lowest-rated dimension in nearly every session. Session IV, which took up the Actions of Immediate Witness, stood out, with confidence in transparency and fairness falling well below the norm even as covenant and conflict ratings stayed high. The pattern is consistent: the concern was the clarity of our rules and the accessibility of participation. Two notes on reading these figures: the percentages reflect those who answered each question, and the later sessions drew far fewer responses, so we treat their individual results as directional rather than precise.

The open-ended responses confirmed a single dominant theme, with a clear equity concern running through it. The greatest source of frustration was navigating the event across multiple technology platforms, and delegates registered for business only felt this most acutely, with particular confusion over whether the Ingathering service was open to them. Other recurring points included QR codes that were hard to scan or read, frequent logouts from the delegate platform and Whova that sent delegates back to their email to find links again, and difficulty reaching ballots and credentials in time to vote.

The feedback also surfaced concerns about accessibility that we want to name directly. While intended to help focus attention on the speakers, several survey respondents raised the decision to disable the delegate Zoom chat during discussion as an accessibility concern. Separately, a number of first-time delegates described registration and the multiple technology platforms as overwhelming and asked for an orientation designed for newcomers.

We have shared the detailed survey responses with the GA Care Teams and are flagging these items for future GA planning.

Closing

Our thanks to all who participated in GA this year. Our platforms and procedures will keep evolving, and your Board of Trustees, led by Co-Moderators Bill Young and the Rev. Kimberly Quinn Johnson, will keep working to improve them. The care that you showed one another, even when the systems supporting our work together fell short, is the foundation we will continue to build on.

In faith,

Rev. Justine Sullivan, Member, Board of Trustees
Chris Chepel, Co-Financial Advisor