

October 2017 Co-Moderator Report

It is an honor to serve as co-moderators and we offer this report as a summary of what we have been doing and how we are approaching our work. Now in our third month of co-moderating, we have established some routines that are helping us to stay connected with each other and our work. In general we video-conference together twice a week and are in regular email and text communication between meetings. With rare exception, we include our co-moderator on all correspondence.

Since becoming co-moderators we have been averaging five or more meetings each week, two between the two of us and the other three with a variety of partners in our work. These partners include bi-monthly meetings with the UUA President and COO, as well as as-needed meetings with other partners such as the co-chairs of the Moderator Selection Committee, chair of the Committee on Institutional Change, working groups of this board, and others as requested.

Both co-moderators are finding that on average we each spend 10-15 hours/week doing the work of co-moderator. Some weeks, such as the week the GA Planning Committee met, Elandria spent 55 hours on board work. We name this knowing that other board members are likewise spending hours each week doing the work of our board and we are grateful for each and every person's contribution to this work! Our hope is that we might bring renewed transparency to the amount of time board members graciously give to our faith.

Board Meetings

To help our work flow and (hopefully) offer clear leadership, we have chosen to alternate taking the lead on our board meetings. Because Elandria has served on the board previously and Barb underwent surgery at the beginning of September, Elandria graciously offered to take the lead on organizing and facilitating our September video meeting and our October board retreat. Barb is taking the lead on facilitating/organizing our January in-person meeting and will begin alternating with Elandria to facilitate our monthly video meetings.

Administration and Board

Along with Vice-Chair Denise Rimes, we have twice met with President Susan Fredrick-Gray and Chief Operating Officer Carey McDonald. The focus of these meetings is to build and maintain a healthy relationship among the UUA and Board leadership wings. The topics discussed include (but are not limited to) our shared vision for how we might work together, our hopes, fears, and dreams for Unitarian Universalism, finances, interpreting policies, and clarifying our understandings of the role board members and staff hold.

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General Assembly Planning Meetings

The September General Assembly Planning Meetings were held from September 11-16th at the UUA headquarters in Boston. One of the co-moderators and the vice-moderator attended the meetings. Below is the Moderator report from the meetings.

GAMAP Meeting

This meeting otherwise known as the **General Assembly Mission of the Association Partnership** is attended by the UUA staff, Board, and the GA Planning Committee. The meeting focused on evaluating GA 2017, developing a theme for GA 2018 and discussing some of the critical aspects of the program and GA overall. This included talking about the NAACP travel advisory and steps that had been taken, BLUU collaborating with the UUA on Public Witness, brainstorming possible Ware lecturers and special speakers, scholarships for 2018 and beyond, and having a conversation about GA 2019 and beyond.

GA 2018 Theme: All Are Called

There will be more networking space in the agenda

There will be a safety team this general assembly to support the safety of our attendees (in the vein of community controlled safety, abolition and restorative practices) with the hope to have them continue in the future. We are going to add some additional volunteers specifically for this role and also want others to help as well.

GA Grid Meeting

The Grid meeting serves as a tactical planning meeting to lay out the primary elements of GA, including worship, celebrations, witness, business of the Association (general sessions), workshops, and entertainment. Participants are similar to those in the GAMAP meeting.

Overall GA Grid Highlights

There was a desire to have less programming overall so that there is more flex time and groups that end up having meetings late at night and early in the morning can try and fit them in. The other decision around time was to have less later night programming and that we wouldn't start general sessions until 9 am since half of the people weren't there to vote.

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General Session

We have 15 hours overall for the Business Sessions and discussion which includes time that we are co-hosting with the Commission on Institutional Change to get at some of the deeper conversations needed.

Thursday 9:15-12:15

Friday 9:00-10:45 and 1:30-3:30

Saturday 9:00-12:15

Sunday 11:00-12:15 and 1:30-4:00

An email that was sent to the broader Grid Meeting will be forwarded to get a sense of some of the thinking around General Session this GA, which includes shorter reporting time and a different way of doing process observations.

GA PC Meeting

The GAPC Planning Committee meeting brings together the members of the Planning Committee, the Director for GA, Board co-moderators and liaison, and directors of various elements of GA (worship, program development, music, youth, etc.)

This was a multi-day meeting and I am just going to lift up some of the highlights.

- Elandria and Denise did a moderator and board talk a couple of times in large part because Elandria left the face to face part of the meeting early and joined a good part of it by Zoom. We talked some about our hopes for the year, where we were at as a board, the purpose of our October meeting and they also asked why Elandria wanted to be one of the co-moderators and hopes in that regard.
- The GA PC shared some non-negotiables around budget which we heard loud and clear which all seem extremely important frankly. Like hearing loop, children's programming, middle school camp, carbon offsetting, all of the environmental pieces we do, and wanting GA to be an accessible anti-racist assembly and needing support around it.
- We agreed to not mess with the budget because they work hard to bring us a balanced budget and due to both Kansas City and Spokane as potential assemblies in which we could lose money we acknowledged the need to keep the reserve as it is.
- Another agreement was to actually send a letter from the board and the planning committee acknowledging the lower scholarship money amount this year and explaining how we got to the high amount last year so that attendees will not get mad at the planning committee and blame them.

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- There will be additional volunteers to form a safety team at General Assembly this year and in the future we hope and we as board members will talk about what our role is in this.
- There was a request for the Board to think about office hours, swag, all getting on stage at different times during GA and other identifiable ways that people know who the board is.
- Another agreement that was made was that Barb and/or Elandria would be at the GA Planning Committee meetings both on the phone and face to face. If we couldn't be there in person we would try and be there by Zoom but it is really important for us to be on the same page and GA is a priority.

Commission on Institutional Change

The moderators have had two meetings with the Commission on Institutional Change and a part of Friday's October Board meeting will be working with the Commission on the Board's role in this work. We will also be talking about how the Board can support the commission and what our agreements around this are. We also hold that the Board is one of the structures and groups that the Commission will be examining and making recommendations around.

Other Committees

The co-moderators have met with the Commission on Social Witness, the GA Planning Committee, Journey Toward Wholeness Committee, Ministerial Fellowship Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Presidential Search Committee, and the Moderator Search Committee.

We met with the committees for clarification around charge, how we can be in relationship, and offering support when asked for particular needs. Many of those can be found in the board meeting notes from the September meeting.

We also worked with the Committees Board Working Group to develop a survey to send to the committees of the board and we thank them for their participation. It is a great help and we want to have positive strong relationships with all of the committees and people that make up our incredible institution and faith.

Upcoming Dates and Meetings

LREDA fall con (11/3-6 in Denver, CO)
November Board Call (11/16)

December Board Call (12/14)
January Board Meeting (1/18-20 at
Highlander and Knoxville, TN)