



Hello, Adult Sponsors of Youth!

Welcome to General Assembly 2017 – Resist and Rejoice!

We are Sam Wilson, Kathy Smith, and Pam Lepley –
Adult Advisors to the Youth Caucus Staff and your
Sponsor Coordinators!

Large spiritual communities like Youth Caucus can be powerful, life-changing, and deeply meaningful. These opportunities cannot happen, however, without the help of Sponsors. **WE ARE GLAD YOU'RE HERE! WELCOME! WE OFFER YOU OUR THANKS AND SUPPORT.**

Sponsor Role

You, the Sponsor, are responsible for the safety, health, and well-being of the youth you are sponsoring at all times throughout GA. To help prepare, review our [Youth Caucus Frequently Asked Questions](#).

You are on the front line and we are your support team. Join the [Youth Caucus 2017 Facebook Group](#) and RSVP to the [General Assembly 2017 Event](#) where you can ask questions and connect with other sponsors.

Sponsor Coordinators Role

- We are your primary contacts at Youth Caucus and we support you in your role as Sponsor.
- We can be reached at **(857) 263-3462** at any time during GA.
- At least one of us will be at every Youth Caucus-sponsored activity.
- Contact us if you need us – we'll contact you if we need you.
- Along with the Youth Caucus chaplains and UUA staff, we will support your youth if something happens to you.

As Sponsor Coordinators, we will: be available through the [Youth Caucus 2017 Facebook Group](#) in advance of GA; provide an Orientation to Youth Caucus on Wednesday; support you in upholding the Youth Caucus Covenant created at Orientation and the [Youth Caucus Participant Covenant](#) signed prior to GA; welcome you and other adults into the Youth Caucus space and programming; offer reassurance to you in your role as Sponsor; field concerns about youth-related programming; create opportunities for youth and sponsors to connect during GA; and to assist in re-connecting if you have lost contact with one another. In the event of a youth emergency, we will work with you, the UUA staff, and the appropriate emergency teams to manage the situation.



Traveling with Youth

It is the policy of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries that youth and their sponsors must stay in the same lodging during General Assembly. We also strongly encourage sponsors to follow their individual congregations Safe Congregations Policy when making travel and housing arrangements. Sponsors or families seeking further guidance can find helpful information in this [Youth in Hotels document from the UUA's Central East Regional Congregational Life Staff](#).

Prepare for GA

In order to have the best GA experience possible, you and your youth should get to know each other and develop a plan. Before you come to New Orleans, take some time to talk things through so that your expectations of each other are clear. Review the [GA schedule and Program Book](#) together. We recommend that youth, sponsors, and parents/guardians create and sign their own written "Agreement" together, which includes expectations for both youth and sponsor roles, responsibilities, and limits. Please refer to our sample agreement on the next page for some items to discuss in advance, such as curfew, expectations for program attendance, and how often you will check in with one another throughout the day.

The First Day of GA

- **Attend the mandatory Youth Caucus and Sponsor Orientation on Wednesday from 4:00-5:15!**
This is where you will meet us as well as all of the other Youth Caucus leaders. This is the place to get any last-minute questions answered. Make-up Youth Caucus and Sponsor Orientations are scheduled for 8:30am on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday for youth and sponsors arriving after Wednesday. Please attend the first orientation available to you after your arrival, as this is where you will receive vital information for having a fun and safe General Assembly experience.
- Look around! Help your youth get oriented to the [Convention Center](#) and where it is in relation to your hotel. Review the ground rules and safety information. Stock up on snacks for you and your youth. Take a deep breath! This is going to be an AWESOME WEEK!!!

Safety, Curfew, and the Unique Environment and Opportunities of New Orleans

Familiarize yourself with the [laws concerning minors](#) and the [age of consent](#) in Louisiana.

Please note that the curfew for youth under 17 years old is very early! In the French Quarter youth must be accompanied by adults after 8pm nightly, everywhere else youth

must be accompanied by adults after 9pm on school nights, 11pm on Friday and Saturday nights.

Programming at General Assembly tends to run until 11pm every night. To meet curfew laws, an adult must accompany youth back to their hotel/lodging after General Assembly programming each night. We highly recommend that adult be the youth's sponsor, or an adult that the youth and sponsor trust. New Orleans police strictly enforce the curfew – they will ask for ID and then arrest. Please note that a disproportionately high number of arrests for curfew violation are youth of color. Even if your youth are 17 or 18 years old (and thus the curfew law does not apply to them), a police officer might not be able to judge their age properly and might stop them anyhow.

New Orleans and the French Quarter

A cultural hub for the south, New Orleans attracts 9 million+ visitors per year. With its distinctive architecture, variety of shopping opportunities, and iconic restaurants, many of those visitors are drawn to the French Quarter.

Please note that the French Quarter is experienced differently after dark. One of the attractions to the Quarter is the street party atmosphere and it is common for people to be loud and inebriated. Please know the [boundaries of the French Quarter](#) make sure that your youth knows them as well.

Grabbing beignets at [Café du Monde](#) at noon then exploring some shops in the Quarter would be a fun activity with your youth. Trying to stroll down Bourbon Street with your youth (regardless of age) after dark – not so much. While in New Orleans, as in any large and busy tourist town, be aware that pickpocketing and petty crime are real. Take care with your possessions, including credit cards and cash, Pay attention to how you carry your wallet, purse, and backpack.



New Orleans Curfew for Youth under 17 years old

French Quarter: 8pm nightly

New Orleans, other than area known as the French Quarter:
9pm on school nights, 11pm on Friday and Saturday nights



New Orleans Like a Local – Attend a Festival!

June 24-25 – Louisiana Cajun-Zydeco Festival

Two unique styles of music, both birthed in Louisiana are celebrated at this annual festival. This free event is held from 11am-7pm both Saturday and Sunday at Louis Armstrong Park, 701 N. Rampart Street. Food vendors, cooking demonstrations, and local craftsmen will all be on hand for the celebration so bring some cash just in case if you want to check it out for lunch or dinner.

We look forward to Resisting and Rejoicing with you in New Orleans!

Sincerely, Sam Wilson, Kathy Smith, and Pam Lepley

Meet Your Sponsor Coordinators



Sam is in his 3rd year as the Director of Youth Ministries at Winchester Unitarian Society, having previously advised youth at Main Line Unitarian Church in PA and others through the former JP District Youth Steering Committee. He also works as a "Guru" for an SAT Company and has otherwise taught art, English as a Second Language, GEDs, singing, and theatre. He is a Program Leader for the UU College of Social Justice, through which he has led several Activate Youth Justice trainings. He particularly loves to: create art for social change, dance like no one's watching, embrace silliness, empower young people, practice anti-racism, sing karaoke, and uplift Unitarian Universalism as a beacon of hope for our world.

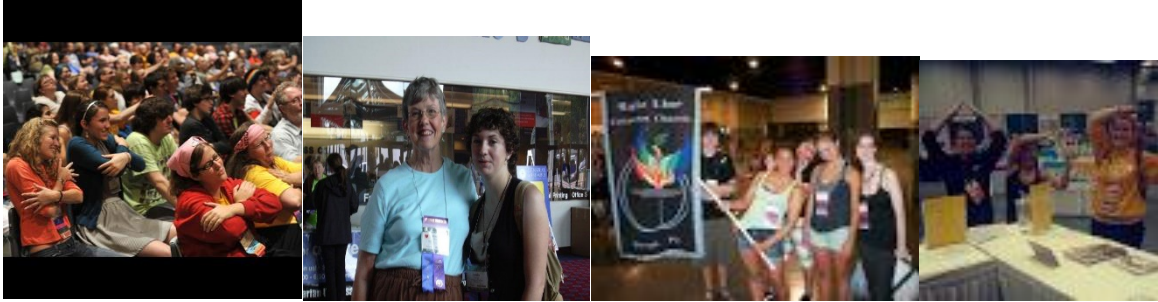


Kathy Smith serves our church in Plano, Texas as Director of Religious Education. She was on Youth Caucus staff in Phoenix and loves every (exhausting, amazing, incredible) minute of General Assembly. As DRE, she is passionate about faith formation that works, social justice that reflects our faith, and building community that sustains both. In her free time, she chases Poke-dudes, performs in community theatre musicals, reads voraciously, and enjoys board games with anyone who can be persuaded to play.



Pam has served as the DRE at the UU Fellowship of Winston Salem for fifteen years. Her previous professional experience includes serving as a foster care social worker for the Department of Social Services and an advocate for survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault. She lives in a chaotically peaceful home with her two teenage daughters, husband, four cats, a dog, and regular drop-in visitors occupying the spare room.

Youth at General Assembly



**Questions before arriving? Please email youth@uua.ga.org with inquiries about Youth Caucus prior to General Assembly.*

SAMPLE AGREEMENT - Youth, Sponsor and Parent/Guardian - SAMPLE AGREEMENT

General Assembly (GA) 2017– New Orleans, LA

The Following are *some* examples of important items for Youth, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) And Sponsors to discuss before going to General Assembly.

We agree that before leaving for GA we will discuss our individual and mutual responsibilities, limits and expectations. Some examples of these may include:

- *What is the youth hoping for from participation in GA? What does the parent/guardian hope for?*
- *What are the parent/guardian/sponsor's/youth's own expectations for youth behavior?*
- *What does the parent/guardian expect from the sponsor? What does the youth expect?*
- *How can the parent/guardian best be contacted? What are everyone's expectations in terms of how often, or under what circumstances, parent(s)/guardian(s) are to be contacted?*
- *How will youth and sponsors arrange meals? How much spending money should the youth bring?*
- *How will any medications be monitored and or administered?*
- *How will sponsors be aware of relevant medical conditions, allergies, or ability to treat youth with over-the-counter medications?*
- *What are your agreements around safety? What is your plan in case of any emergency?*
- *What are your agreements around self care, including sleeping, eating, etc.?*
- *How will you take what you've learned back to your home congregation and/or district/region?*

The Following are *some* specific examples of agreements that the Youth and their Sponsor may wish to make:

- **In Terms of Spending Time Together At GA:**

We, the **Youth** and the **Sponsor**, agree to meet at least ___ times per day while at GA, at a time and place that works for both of us. *Examples of good times/places to do so:*

- *We will attend general session, a workshop or worship together.*
- *We will share a meal.*
- *We will check in at an agreed time/place.*

- **In Terms of Communicating with Each Other During GA:**

We, the **Youth** and the **Sponsor**, agree that before leaving for GA we will create a system for communication with each other. *Examples of good systems of communication include the following:*

- *We will carry each other's cell phone number and hotel room number at all times.*
- *The convention center may have limited cell phone reception. We will have a back-up plan in case we can't reach each other by phone.*
- *We will designate a specific Meet Up Spot where we will generally meet up by default, rally as a group, go back to if we lose each other, etc.*
- *We will share our expected schedules so we can find each other in an emergency.*

• **In Terms of Individual Responsibilities at GA:**

- We, the **Youth** and the **Sponsor**, agree to attend the mandatory Wednesday afternoon Orientation or the first available Orientation for arrival after Wednesday's meeting..
- **Sponsor:** I understand the Adult Sponsor Code of Ethics and I pledge to follow it. I also understand and agree to the expectation that adult sponsors will not drink alcohol or take inebriating or illegal drugs while at GA.
- **Youth:** I agree to attend at least ___ events (workshops, Youth Caucus-sponsored events, General Sessions, and/or worship services) while at GA.
- **Youth:** I agree to the rules as outlined in the "Participant Policy and Covenant," and will obey all state and local laws, as well as the laws of the hotel or residence where we are staying. I will also abide by the policy on sexuality and community.
- **Youth:** I agree to the curfews set by my sponsor. I understand that while at GA I am the responsibility of my sponsor. Please note the New Orleans city curfew for unaccompanied youth:

Children 16 or younger who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian must be home by 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday in the summer. On Friday and Saturday, they need to be home by 11 p.m. - **unless they are in the French Quarter or a section of Faubourg Marigny that includes Frenchmen Street. Curfew in the French Quarter is 8pm nightly.**

<http://thelensnola.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/curfew-ordinance.pdf>

Youth, Sponsor and Parent(s)/Guardian(s): We understand that this agreement is created between us to ensure comfort and safety for youth, sponsors and parents/guardians. We further understand that if the youth violates any GA rules, parents/guardians will be notified and the youth will be sent home at the expense of the parent/guardian.

Youth Signature

Parent Signature

Sponsor Signature

Please Note:

*This is a ***sample*** agreement between youth, sponsors, and parents.*

Look it over. Modify it. Make it your own.

Create your own agreement between yourselves!

Agreements between youth, sponsors and parents/guardians should be built on mutual respect and understanding. Everyone benefits when youth, sponsors and parents/guardians all agree in advance about what they expect from each other. You may want to print your own modified version of this document and formally sign it in each other's presence to help you remember the covenant you have made with each other.