

June 30, 2023

Dear friends,

We are writing to follow up on the events that took place at General Assembly related to UUA staff and Young Adults at General Assembly (YA@GA), particularly in connection to the Business Resolution focused on divestment and reparations. As members of a faith community, it is not unusual to have disagreements about the direction our values call us to take. However, for this General Assembly, it became clear that the roles of UUA volunteers, staff, and delegates were conflated in governance discussions, and that our systems for supporting our young adult community at GA failed to provide that support. As your current President, I offer my deepest apology to those who feel these impacts profoundly in our faith community. As president and president-elect, we recognize the responsibility of the UUA, and we both take seriously the need to repair our relationships. On Sunday, June 25, we both met with young adults in the YA@GA space to answer questions and be in conversation. In the interest of transparency, we want to provide as much information on the situation as we can while respecting the privacy of many involved.



We want to be clear that there is much we still do not know about how the situation evolved. To that end, we will be starting an inquiry process to determine the facts of what led us here, and identify ways to avoid this type of conflict in the future. We note that this inquiry is as much about ensuring that we at the Unitarian Universalist Association are holding ourselves accountable as it is to determine what happened.

We recognize that this situation created feelings of confusion and ill will for some attending GA. It is important for us to begin the process to repair the breach created by these events, and we can only do so if we have an understanding of what took place. We also want to provide support to those who have experienced harm as we continue our movement to build the Beloved Community.

We acknowledge that the events of last week are rooted in recurring cycles of distrust between the UUA and our youth and young adults. We hope to use this moment to break these cycles so that we can begin to rebuild trust. Our young leaders bring a particular passion, creative thinking, and a sense of urgency that is vital to us as a faith community. We must find ways to honor and invite their leadership that allow us to continue in covenantal relationship through challenging conversations. More broadly, Unitarian Universalists of all ages have worked hard to achieve our justice priorities, including divestment from fossil fuel companies. We know that UUs are committed to the work of climate justice and shaping the way forward on reparations, and we are unequivocally committed to ensuring that this challenging but critically important work continues.

In the coming weeks, we will make sure to keep you informed of the inquiry as it takes shape. We want to encourage those who have information to speak with those charged with determining what happened so that we can hold ourselves accountable, create processes for repair, and begin healing. In the meantime, if you would like to reach out to us, please do so at president@uua.org.

Thank you for your hard work and support in our wider faith community.

Faithfully,

Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray
President
Unitarian Universalist Association

Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt
President-elect
Unitarian Universalist Association

