

Initial Reflection from 2023 Alternate Delegate Kerry Lusignan (updated report to follow after Sunday)

As described briefly in our annual meeting, as an alternate delegate, I attended almost all of the sessions with our delegates and participated in online discussions. I do recommend anyone who is interested in having a voice and better knowledge of these issues consider being an alternate delegate, if you are not sure yet whether you could attend as a delegate. You do not have access to some communication channels at GA that registered delegates do, but the live discussion chat channels set up by Leilani in our Google space worked great and were very rewarding to participate in.

As noted, I found this part of the process very rewarding. We were able to discuss in depth the various issues such as AIWs, Amendments, etc, and sometimes do live chats while watching events. I wasn't familiar with Google-land and Leilani's experience and tutorials were very helpful.

I also found the lead up to GA very rewarding as far as most of the Article II Revisions process. I started participating at the previous GA when I attended almost all the business sessions with Kerrie Schurr as her "chat partner" and I watched all the Article II presentations. These have recently been posted by Rob Spirko in the Blue Boat group, and I highly recommend this post as an additional resource for those interested in getting more up to speed on Article II.

I attended about ten of the feedback sessions held by the Article II Commission, talked with many fellow UUs, and started the Blue Boat Passengers Facebook group (a public forum based on how our th Principle Learning space was designed) to continue the conversations. I also participated heavily in the collaborative Amendments process and co-authored the Sources/Principle + added Creative Source compromise amendment that was presented by Janet Leavens. Some of you may recall this was offered for congregational discussion while editing was ongoing (in both our congregations) and then for intensive collaboration after the workshops held by the UUA.

This part was still rewarding and especially trying to craft an Amendment of that kind, with my profound love of and belief in language and my genuine interest in understand all points of view, was wonderful.

Unfortunately, from my perspective, the Amendments process was not ideal. I will explain further when I update this weekend, but in a nutshell, over 400 amendments (well, some were more complaints than amendments) posted publicly on the Discuss Board were winnowed down to around 85 (based on who went forward with collaboration) and then from among these, 15 amendments were chosen to be presented (but two were not allowed for lack of time; one of those returns this year with a much higher bar to meet, the Peace amendment).

Authors of amendments who participated in this seemingly collaborative process had not been told that the Commission would speak and oppose some of the amendments, and were not given a chance to correct any misunderstandings or outright errors. Our Sources/Inspirations amendment had several problems in how it was addressed at the Pro/Con mike, including one

speaker who addressed a completely different Amendment that restored the original Sources. Requests for a correction to be made before voting close were not honored.

I found some more aspects of GA problematic, which I'll try to flesh out this weekend, but the main point I want to make is that I feel it important for our congregation to make an informed consent decision and look at the very different interpretations of what these changes may mean to our faith. In my view, there are legitimate questions as to what passage of these Article II changes, in combination with possible changes that have been floated regarding Article III, which is to be worked on next. I think this is a much more complex issue than whether to approve the 8th Principle, which we have done.

Our congregation has been through a lot and recently gotten a grant to continue our innovative approach to reimagining Right Relations/Community wellbeing. What I have drawn from this process, and the challenges of the past five years, is how more effective accountability is both necessary and complicated. As part of our growth and attempts to heal and repair and make more welcoming for all our own community, I urge all congregants to inform themselves on these matters.

There has been much debate and a fair amount of acrimony, especially in online groups, over differing perceptions and goals re the Article II revisions. I've followed some of the online discussions in the past six months or so. There is an opportunity THIS SATURDAY for a conflict seminar led by a UU minister, whose book I've started reading (Transforming Conflict) that I recommend Westsiders try to attend if possible:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1911412409374451>  
[https://www.uujme.org/transforming\\_conflict?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3zHRNseC46WB0QR4KTz05XmRU9lkB82j13PLD1KUwYKh3Z7gl\\_TYQVLHQ\\_aem\\_Aarldgv45\\_WRJFvf1\\_KFFRJcmd5KjY-InW61o4fKoVzVgZwyE4LdpVAJjS6hNW6zoMtILVL7dFqcEytBNflaSX\\_9](https://www.uujme.org/transforming_conflict?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR3zHRNseC46WB0QR4KTz05XmRU9lkB82j13PLD1KUwYKh3Z7gl_TYQVLHQ_aem_Aarldgv45_WRJFvf1_KFFRJcmd5KjY-InW61o4fKoVzVgZwyE4LdpVAJjS6hNW6zoMtILVL7dFqcEytBNflaSX_9)

Thank you for your engagement.

Kerry Lusignan