

What breaks my heart, what brings me hope

Susie Weller:

I love GA.

Each year, I fight the urge. Maybe I shouldn't go. It'll be the same. It'll be too expensive. What's so great about Kansas City? What am I going to learn? And then I put all of that aside and take the push from my Higher Power and go. And sure enough, it was just as great as years before. I even went to more workshop sessions.

I love GA because it gives me hope.

With all that's happens in the world and in our community, I could, we could all use a little hope.:

Children being forcefully detained here in Athens.

People being killed or detained because they are people of color.

Children being abuse and removed from their families

Businesses and capital gain being treated with more regard than human interest.

Refugees being treated as terrorists

That people of color have a different life experience than me all due to the color of their skin

That the resources our planet yields is more important than it's health

This list could go on, but at GA I got a little of that cherished hope.

At GA, like Iva mentioned they take recycling seriously. There are three separate receptacles, one for landfill, one for recycling and another for compost and someone is standing there to go through and make sure it is done properly and they are polite about it.

There is a covenant at GA to foster multicultural dialogue and community, which included assume positive intent on the part of fellow participants, ask questions from the standpoint of "holy curiosity," withhold unsolicited personal judgement, speak personal concerns directly with that person, not about them and the list continued.

There is a Safety Team where anyone can report to if they are feeling unsafe in our shared environment and it is encouraged to use this rather than the police, in hopes that we can solve our issues amongst ourselves without bringing an outside law enforcement body that has a history of treating our brothers and sisters of color differently, into the mix.

There is Right Relationships Team that existed to listen and engage with people who have experienced any form of oppression or feel marginalized

Both of these teams reported out each day with themes, things we were doing well and things that needed to improve. We were held accountable, we could see what others were going through. We could see places of privilege.

There were more minorities on the stage and front and center. And there were more services and songs were sung in Spanish.

Alterations to were made to the UUA bylaws for more inclusivity including neutral pronouns and adding youth to the board.

There were over twenty workshops that discussed White Supremacy Culture, compared to the one last year.

And I can feel the spirit in this large UUA body. Services talk about the spiritual work we are all doing. That our faith calls us to do

The work that I am called to do is understand and share about White Supremacy Culture. I want to learn and I want to learn with you, what it is and what my part is and has been. We, as UUs, are grounded in our covenant and spiritual principles, which begins to offer a safe space for these talks. I hope you will join me for these discussions. \

Just the idea that we are doing these things as a large body gives me tremendous hope that we can grow, that we are growing. What if we implemented some of these tools so readily used at GA here at UUFA.

I love GA and I have hope for our future!

We are the children of the ones who did not die

We are the children of the ones who could fly

We are the children of the ones who persevered

We are fearless. We are strong and we are ready to carry on.