

GA Workshop Scheduled to Help UUA Board Develop “Ends” Statements

The UUA Board invites all congregational leaders, including Board members, officers, ministers, COOs, DREs and other similar leaders to attend a GA workshop:

Unitarian Universalism: Making a Meaningful, Relevant Difference
Thursday June 26
3:15 – 6:15 p.m.
Convention Center, Floridian ABC

We’re hoping 300-500 people participate in this conversation to provide input the UUA Board can use to develop “ends” statements that identify who we’re striving to be in the future.

Based on the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) model, and focused on inspiration and deep connection, this session starts with partners interviewing each other about a time when they saw Unitarian Universalism make a difference that mattered. This could be a difference Unitarian Universalism made personally to you or your family, locally to your community, or globally to your state, your nation or the world. Then, two pairs join together to find the values connecting these experiences and to explore the inspiring possibilities that their experiences and wishes open up for our future together. It’s these possibilities, along with other input such as the Open Space conversations from the 2007 GA, which the UUA Board will take and refine further into “ends” statements to guide our future direction.

Won’t you join other UU leaders and add your voice to this process? No need to RSVP. Just come and encourage other leaders to add their voice as well. If you have questions, please contact:

Laura Park
AI Consultant to the UUA Board
651-271-7666
laura@laurapark.name

We look forward to seeing you there!

– Gini Courter, UUA Moderator

FAQ About Unitarian Universalism: Making a Meaningful, Relevant Difference

When is this workshop?

It’s at the 2008 General Assembly (GA) in Fort Lauderdale FL: Thursday June 26, 3:15 – 6:15 p.m., Convention Center, Floridian ABC

Who should attend this workshop?

Any congregational leader, including Board members, officers, ministers, COOs, and DREs, who want to add their voice to the UUAs process of writing “ends.”

What are “ends”?

“Ends” are the UUA’s governing policies that reflect our collective vision of who we want to be in the world. They provide the benchmark for everything that we do. Every choice is guided by the question “Will this help us achieve our ends?”

What will happen in the workshop?

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This sounds like work—do I really want to participate?

Listen to the comments from participants in a similar workshop at their church:

“It was most valuable to see and realize the common threads of experience and interests in being a member of this church”

“I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the vision for the church’s future. Also the opportunity to connect with other church members—just what I’m hoping to see more of.”

“I really enjoyed the small group dynamics. Wonderful opportunity to learn from other members what they have experienced, what they value. I have met four new friends.”

“It was amazing how many things came out of my stories!”

“Initially I was skeptical, by the end of the evening, I was very happy I participated.”

“I was a bit worried that this would be too much thinking and work but it turned out to be an enjoyable experience. Thanks for taking the time to listen to our thoughts and wishes.”

“Coming into the evening I was admittedly not excited about having to interview and share etc. but found it valuable by the end of the evening.”

What is the Appreciative Inquiry model this workshop is based on?

Appreciative Inquiry, or AI, was developed by David Cooperrider of Case Western University, as a powerful change process that uses positive questions and interviews to help people focus on how an organization functions at its best.

According to AI consultant Barbara Stoker, “Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations and the relevant world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life' when it is most effective. . . AI involves the art of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive energy, sharpen vision, and inspire action for change.

“By asking positive questions, we generate new images of the future. These powerful images of ourselves, our organizations, and the world allow us to create the future we desire.” [www.barbarastoker.com]