

Lots of Reasons to Come Along!

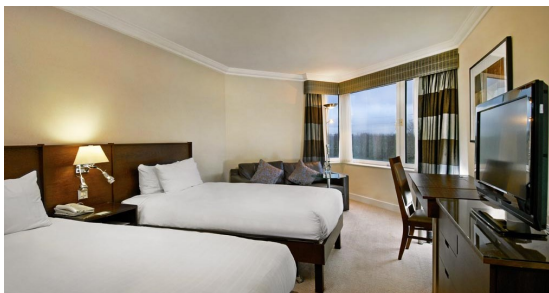
There is so much to do if you want to get the most out of your time at one of the G.A. Annual Meetings, but you can also relax, enjoy the company of like-minded individuals, meet up with old friends and make new ones, and just soak up the atmosphere, which is always motivational and inspirational.

- ◆ Be a part of the Anniversary Service—inspiring readings, address and music
- ◆ Get your views heard by taking part in the debates on the motions
- ◆ Support your own views or those of your congregation by voting
- ◆ Listen to some excellent guest speakers
- ◆ Attend a few of the workshops held by Unitarian interest groups, such as the Peace Fellowship or the Women's League
- ◆ Find out more at special training sessions and workshops for church officers
- ◆ For “early birds”, there are short morning services for shared worship at 7.30am each day
- ◆ Visit the book shop, and the various stalls selling goods, or providing information
- ◆ Experience the joyful sound of 300+ Unitarian voices raised in praise!
- ◆ Hear more about our vision for the future
- ◆ Appreciate good food and good company
- ◆ And generally enjoy yourself!

So why not join in with like-minded—and independently-minded—Unitarians for some fun and spiritual inspiration at the 2016 G.A. Annual Meetings at Birmingham Hilton Metropole from Wednesday 30th March to Saturday 2nd April.

You can come for a day or two, or all four days, and you can do as much, or as little, as you fancy, but the important thing is—you'll be **INVOLVED** in the **FUTURE** of our Unitarian movement, and that's important!

The Birmingham Hilton Metropole 4-star Conference Hotel



- Close to the National Exhibition Centre (NEC)
- Complimentary shuttle service to Birmingham International Airport and Rail Station
- Spa, heated indoor swimming pool and 24-hour fitness centre
- Complimentary WiFi
- Large, versatile conference space, banqueting and meeting rooms and comfortable bedrooms



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The 2016 G.A. Annual Meetings

**30th March—2nd April,
at the Birmingham
Hilton Metropole**



**All Unitarians and
Unitarian-Universalists
are welcome to attend
and enjoy the event**

The 2016 G.A. Annual Meetings, Wednesday 30th March to Saturday 2nd April

Every year, around Easter time, the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches holds its Annual Meetings, and over 300 delegates from congregations, fellowships, district associations and affiliated societies attend, along with individual Unitarians. These meetings are commonly known as “The G.A.”

In 2016 our G.A. Annual Meetings will be held at the **Birmingham Hilton Metropole**, a 4-star conference hotel in the grounds of the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) which provides excellent facilities, great transport links, and real value for money. Easy to get to by car, bus or train, there will even be a courtesy shuttle mini-bus running from Birmingham International station, which is just a 10 minute walk from the hotel. It has a spa, with free pool, gym and sauna, as well as discounted spa treatments, plus it has lovely en-suite double and twin bedrooms, pleasant reception, lounge and bar areas, large dining rooms, and excellent rooms for our workshops, meetings, plenary sessions and social events. Conveniently all of these will take place inside the hotel. Also, like last year there will be a discount of £15 per night per person available for people who choose to share a room with family or friends—an attractive option which could save a total of £90 per couple!



The Programme

This always includes a wide range of meetings and workshops over the four days, to reflect the variety of interest groups within the Unitarian movement, as well as the important Plenary sessions where Unitarian business is discussed, and where participants can voice their views and where voting takes place on the range of Motions submitted in advance by the congregations of various churches or fellowship groups. Most Unitarians enjoy a good debate, as we naturally have a wide spread of ideas and beliefs, and although the topics are often quite serious, the sessions are usually uplifting, thought provoking, and sometimes fun! There are also opportunities to share worship and singing together—a short service is available early every morning, and we also have our Anniversary Service on one of the evenings. Each year this is led by a different Minister, in 2016 it will be Rev Alex Bradley - Principal of Unitarian College, Manchester. In addition, on another evening we can look forward to a celebration organised by the Unitarian Peace Fellowship.



Guest Speakers



Every year we have several inspiring guest speakers, starting on the first day with the John Relly Beard Lecture - this year it's The Very Rev Peter Francis, a frequent broadcaster and commentator on religious matters for the BBC.

Our Keynote Speakers are equally varied - last year it was Rev Jill McAllister, Senior Programmes Consultant for the ICUU (International Council of Unitarians and Universalists). This year it will be Tehmina Kazi, Director of British Muslims for Secular Democracy, a group of Muslim democrats working to raise awareness about democracy, particularly secular democracy, within British Muslim communities and the wider public.



Welcoming the New President

One of the key features is the hand-over ceremony to welcome the new President of the General Assembly. This year, Rev John Clifford will pass the baton to our new President, Dorothy Hewerdine.



Youth Programme

Young people are well catered for too, with lots of activities designed for all age groups, and often the older members are involved in helping to write and publish the daily magazine for delegates, called GA-Zette - a “must read” for information, and often for a good giggle too!

Bits and Bobs and Books!

There's also a chance to buy books etc at the Book Shop, and to browse the various stalls selling lovely products or providing interesting information.

Catering and Sociable Time

The event is always fully catered, which means plenty of delicious meals each day, plus of course, the bonus of no cooking or washing up! Coffee breaks and mealtimes are also opportunities to catch up with old friends or make new ones, discuss the issues that have come up in the Plenary Sessions, or just to find out what makes your fellow Unitarians “tick”.

On our final evening there is often entertainment provided after dinner, from award winning comedians such as Robin Ince in 2014, to musical acts like Elle and the Pocket Belles in 2015. Plus, of course the chat and discussion often goes on in the bar or the lounge after each day's programme has finished, so you might want to join in!

If you've never been to one of our Annual Meetings, then perhaps it's time you did—and for those who often come, then the 2016 event will be held at the same 4-star venue as in 2015, with terrific facilities and accommodation, in a very convenient location and at a great value-for-money price, so whether you want to be there for just a day or two, or for the whole event.....

BE INSPIRED, BE MOTIVATED, BE THERE!