



Might you be interested in bringing your child to the 2024 General Assembly Annual Meetings at the Staverton Park Hotel in Northamptonshire from 4-6 April?

If so, I invite you to read on...

For those of you who don't know, supported by a team of experienced GA volunteer youth leaders, I organise a range of activities for infants, juniors and adolescents at The General Assembly Annual Meetings.

Our intention is to nourish the spirit of our participants through kindness, friendship and play.



Participants getting to know each other.

For juniors and adolescents, the theme for this year's meetup is, 'Who am I?' Expect there to be art, conversation, dance, drama, music and storytelling. There'll also be periods of free play and downtime for folk to rest, pursue their own interests or hang out with their new friends. Along with a registered childcare provider, we're also providing a separate crèche facility for babies and toddlers.

For the entirety of the Annual Meetings, the General Assembly will have exclusive use of the main venue (the spa and golf club will remain open to the public, but these are in a separate building). This will help us to make and maintain a safe space for all. All our youth volunteers are appropriately DBS checked to ensure their suitability to support this event. There will be an appropriate number of first aiders on site throughout the meetings.



Free play is an important part of what we do.

Timetable

Day 1:

Session 1: 2pm – 4pm.

Day 2:

Session 2: 8:30am – 1:30pm.

Session 3: 2:40pm – 4pm.

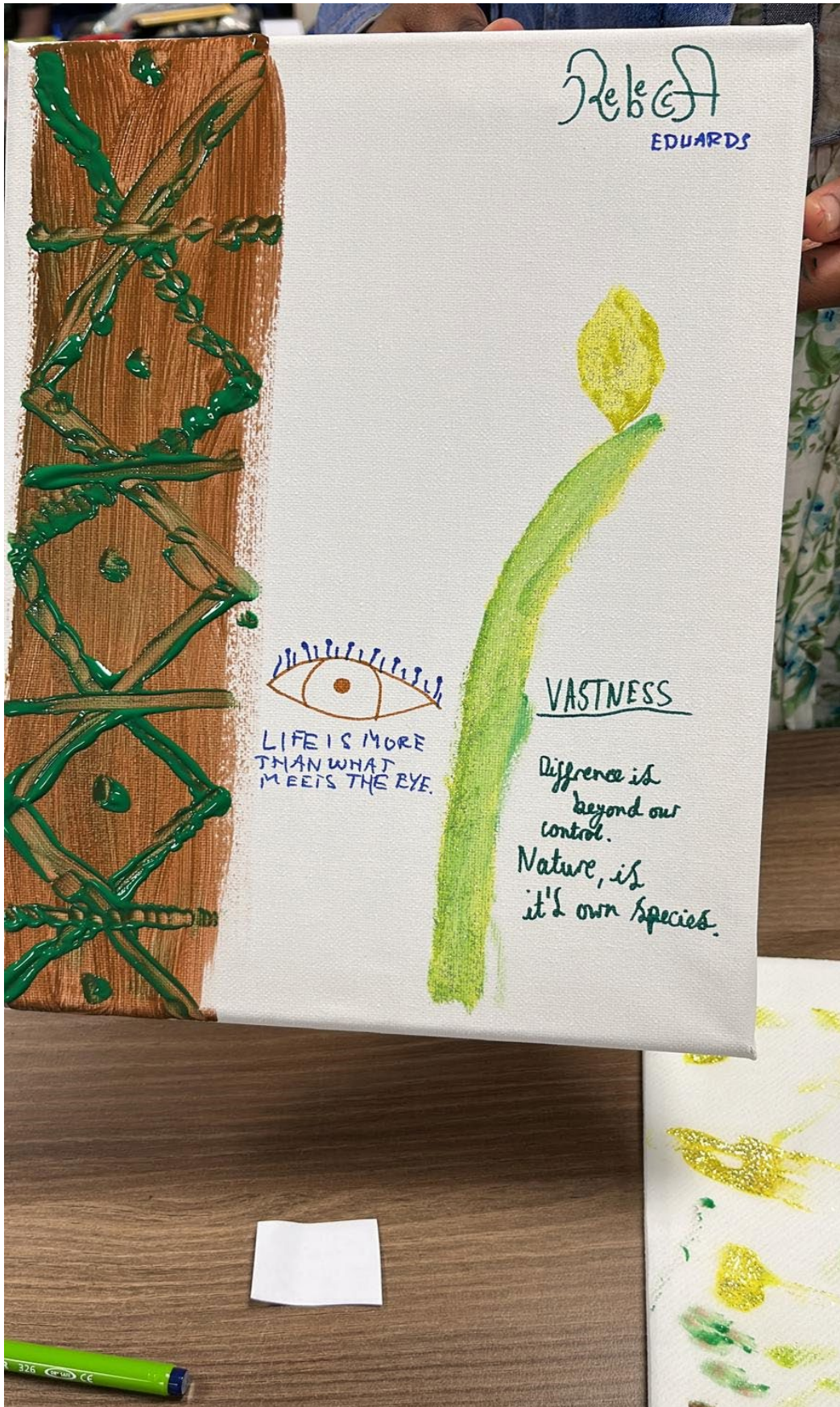
Day 3:

Session 4: 8:30 – 12:50pm.

Outside of these sessions participants are the responsibility of their parents or guardians. This means that the GA team will not be taking responsibility for the youth participants during breakfast, lunch, and dinner times. The hotel has agreed to organise an early dinner sitting especially for families with young children. I should add that if your child has specific dietary requirements which you'd like us to pass onto the venue, you must let us know through the booking form.

As a family, if you'd value some quality time to yourselves, there's always the opportunity to do your own thing. You might wish to create a timetable of your own incorporating a mixture of GA Youth programming and family time. We encourage you to use this time in a way which best meets your needs.

You might be interested to know that the hotel has a pool onsite which offers family swim sessions from 4 – 5pm. These sessions are supervised by a lifeguard and are free of charge to hotel guests. Perhaps that might appeal to you? Daventry Country Park is a short 7-minute drive from the hotel. For some that might offer an attractive change of scene. Both the venue and the local area have a lot to offer and are worth checking out ahead of your visit.



Rebecca's reflection on last year's theme on nature knowing's

To help reduce any financial barriers faced by those wishing to attend, The General Assembly, supported by grants from both The Bowland Trust and The Wood Green Trust, provides a concessionary ticket for those under 18 years of age. The cost is £75.00 per person. For parents and guardians, depending on personal circumstances, there are a range of tickets available including subsidised, standard and patron rates. Additional financial support can often be sought from congregations and District Associations. Adult ticket prices will be released soon.

To inform parents and guardians of final arrangements, I organise an information evening, via Zoom, approximately two weeks before we meet in person. During this time, I'll provide a brief overview of each provision, clarify responsibilities and answer questions which arise. Of course, you're very welcome to drop me an email before then.

All are welcome, whether or not your children already take part in congregational life. We hope it will be a chance for them to make new friends, as well as for you to have a chance to enjoy what the annual meetings have to offer, knowing your children are in safe hands, having fun, and making meaningful connections. It may be a chance for you to connect with other Unitarian parents too.

If you have any questions feel free to get in touch. Always happy to help.

Best,

Gavin Howell

ghowell@unitarian.org.uk

Youth Coordinator for The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.