

FFWPU USA: Ilya and Diane Hack - New District Pastors of the Southeast District

Naokimi Ushiroda
March 26, 2023



Photos courtesy of Atlanta Family Church

"We are very honored by this incredible opportunity," said Diane Hack. "Most of all, we're overwhelmed by the amount of love and support we have received, as well as all the prayers."

On March 26, Ilya and Diane Hack, a young Unificationist couple, were installed as the new co-pastors of the Atlanta Family Church, as well as district leaders overseeing the Southeast region that includes Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, and Puerto Rico. It's a huge step for the couple, who served their respective communities on the East and West coast for many years in various roles before receiving the Marriage Blessing together in February 2020.



"It's really a privilege to welcome them," said Dr. Achille Acolatse, FFWPU USA Southeast regional director. Dr. Acolatse was among the Unificationist leaders and community members celebrating the couple during their recent installation ceremony at the Atlanta Family Church.

"We thank Pastor Achille for his patience as we prayed about [this opportunity]," said Diane in her remarks during a recent FFWPU USA leaders' meeting. "It was such an incredible moment to see a lot of members - even those who have been distant - come to the ceremony and welcome us."

The warm community turnout has inspired the couple as they relocate from New York City to the South. For Diane, a registered nurse pursuing her Masters Degree in the same field, it's a new chapter full of possibilities as she brings some five years of experience working with the movement's young adults and youth of New York and the Northeast. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic - which hit New York City

hard - she also worked tirelessly as a case manager and ambassador at the New York State Department of Health. Her contributions to WFWP USA, now as the national social media manager, have further enhanced her sense of public service and personal community engagement.



Similarly, Ilya has invested in the faith community through GPA and as a former sound engineer for IPEC, as well as previous yearslong work with CARP Las Vegas as a media director, fundraiser, and event coordinator. With a Bachelor's Degree in cinematography, he's taken on countless projects as a film producer and editor in New York while also contributing to the BFM Department as a matching supporter and Northeast director.

The Hacks said they hope to build upon the great foundation of the Atlanta community and their predecessor, Rev. Luke Higuchi. "We're grateful for the Atlanta community," said Ilya. "They have worked hard and [developed] a lot of foundation here ... There is so much investment, dedication, and prayers here, and we want to be able to take [the community] to the next level with the foundation that exists," he said, while noting the community's 10-year fundraising commitment to pay for their church building as a prime example. The couple also said establishing a care ministry is a priority for them in the near future. "We hope to provide the same help and care to our [elder] generation who have invested so much," Ilya said.



The couple, who met with local Unificationists after the ceremony, were delighted by the community's receptiveness to their plans and local goals for the year. "We know that the community is with us, and they're ready to support," said Diane. "And [the youth] felt so inspired that they have a young couple to lead them and work together." The Hacks have been personally visiting local families since the March 26 ceremony, which coincided with the start of a 40-day national prayer condition and special grace offering being provided by True Mother.

"It all seems very interconnected, and I thought [their installation] was very special," said Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, FFWPU USA president, who attended the ceremony in person. "It was a chance for healing and revival in Atlanta, especially as Diane and Ilya are an interracial couple representing our movement's origins in the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

The Hacks said they also feel great hope for Atlanta as they anticipate the journey ahead. "We hope to do great things in Atlanta together with all the ministries here," said Diane.