

## UPF Berlin, Germany: Believers Share Experiences of Peace Through Faith

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Berlin, Germany - "Can religions today credibly speak of peace, let alone realize it?" This was the topic of the event held by UPF-Germany in Berlin on February 17, 2024, on the occasion of World Interfaith Harmony Week.



Instead of guest speakers presenting lectures, theories or statistics, the program involved participants sharing their personal experiences of finding peace through their own living faith. The group included representatives of Christianity, Judaism, Sufism, the Bahai faith, Scientology and Unificationism.

To begin, a candle and globe were passed from speaker to speaker as they each read a version of the Golden Rule as it is presented in their religion. This was followed by several representative prayers for peace, reconciliation, and unity among the forces of good, including religions, against the forces of evil, namely war, conflict, hatred and destruction. The floor was then opened for free exchange.

An elderly gentleman from the Jewish tradition stressed that God is a living, lively force behind the scriptures, and more than 3,000 years ago gave mankind instructions as to how to create peace. This force

of love is more important in daily life than institutionalized religion, he said.

The African founding pastor of a Christian church in Berlin testified how God had shown Himself to him; his questioning and recognition of a divine presence behind nature and in the holy scriptures led him away from atheism.



The Sufi representative spoke of the importance of taking personal responsibility, seeking God and His love and then living a life expressing love, kindness and forgiveness.

The two members of the Church of Scientology explained that God's love expressed through humanity is necessary for world peace, and that the task of religion is to help people to better their characters.



The Bahai representative prayed that more people would find greater love and work on their personal development, thus coming closer and closer to goodness.

The Unificationists present emphasized that only if people work for the common good, with love and compassion, can they realize the purpose of religion, which is to bring about world peace as one family under God.

Everyone was touched by the statements of the other speakers, all of whom were different, yet all stressed that God's love and power must be experienced in one's life, and that it is humans who bear the responsibility to bring peace in the world. They all testified, through personal experience in their own lives of faith, to the centrality of divine love among humanity.

*English translation: Catriona Valenta*