

The first monthly National Ministry meeting of 2016

Michael Balcomb
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On Friday, January 8 over 130 people attended the first monthly National Ministry meeting of 2016 at the New Yorker Hotel. The National Ministry Team, local and district pastors, representatives of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) and participants of the CARP Momentum workshop all gathered together in celebration of the New Year and to share the good news of their latest work and progress. Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Chairman of FFWPU North America, shared some exciting updates as well as a New Year's message.



Mari Curry, Vice President of FFWPU USA, emceed the event. She invited the group to reflect on 2015 as they greeted each other in this meeting of the New Year. Rev. Chris Hempowicz gave an opening prayer, followed by a Hoon Dok Hae reading by Miilhan Stephens. With True Heavenly Parent's (God's) Day just a month away (Feb. 8), the reading emphasized the importance of setting our goals centered on our Heavenly Parent, who is always with us.

The following are among the reports given from recent programs, upcoming events, and nationwide ministries and organizations:

Preparing for True Parents' Birthday



Dr. Ki Hoon Kim talked about this year's celebration of True Parents' birthday around the world. As Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, Muslims the birth of Mohammed, and Buddhists the birth of Buddha, the celebration of True Parents' birthday is a way for Unificationists to honor our founders and share the good news of the coming of True Parents.

True Mother wrote lyrics for a song to commemorate this day, and asked composers in the USA, Korea and Japan to send proposed melodies. In the end, she chose Unificationist composer-conductor David Eaton's rendition song as the official song for True Parents' birthday. This song will go through finishing touches and soon be released for all communities to use in their local Holy Day celebrations.



"True Mother says that True Parents' birthday needs to be known to the whole world quickly," said Dr. Kim. He then introduced Rev. George Augustus Stallings, Co-Chairman of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) to share more about how he and his church are preparing to celebrate this Holy Day. Rev. Stallings shared about meeting recently with True Mother and realizing the importance of celebrating True Parents' birthday around the world. As the first Christian church to take down the cross, his church is determined to be the first Christian church to officially celebrate True Parents' birthday.

The 20th Annual True Family Values Ministry Banquet



Rev. David Rendel from Chicago shared about December's True Family Values Ministry events in Chicago, New York and Las Vegas.

“The concept of ‘true family values’ encapsulates everything True Parents have been working on for God’s providence,” he said. “True Mother was very interested in this, the 20th Anniversary of the True Family Values Awards Banquet and dispatched FFWPU International President Sun Jin Moon, to deliver her message. Events in Chicago included a gathering of over 70 young adults, a UPF session with 120 people, and a banquet with over 700 people celebrating 10 awardees.”

In Las Vegas, over 1,000 celebrated with True Mother at the International Peace Education Center. The Apple Heaven musical ensemble from Korea was an endearing part of all three programs. Prof. Yeon Ah Moon gave an introduction, and then True Mother shared a poignant message proclaiming clearly the coming of True Parents.

Aloha Winter Workshop



Crescentia DeGoede, Director of the Blessing & Family Ministry, shared her experience as part of the staff of the Aloha Winter Workshop at East Garden from December 28-31. Twenty-six young people from around the country, mostly aged 16-21 and already youth leaders in their own communities took this opportunity to inherit the traditions of True Parents.

Crescentia and her husband and two other young couples—Mari and Richard Curry; and David and Kaeleigh Moffitt—led the workshop, continuing a tradition started by True Mother in the summer of 2013 in Hawaii. “We were able to experience the original intention of the Aloha Workshop to foster a family spirit and experience the love of God and True Parents, all while connecting to this place where True Parents worked for many years,” she said.

Participants gained practical tools and created concrete project plans to implement back at home. Workshop staff are following up to continue their support, share tools, and encourage them to follow through on their commitments.

Another Aloha Leadership Workshop will be held in July 2016. Stay tuned for dates and location!

Foundation Day Marriage Blessing



Crescentia DeGoede took the podium once again to share about the upcoming Marriage Blessing ceremony on Foundation Day (Feb. 20). So far, 40 couples are signed up to attend the event in Korea, and over 30 locations around the USA are also ready to host couples for the Marriage Blessing.

If your local community plans to host a Blessing ceremony this February, please make sure your location is registered with the Blessing & Family Ministry. If you are participating in a Blessing ceremony in the United States, the deadline to register is January 31.

International Leadership Conference and True Parents' Birthday



Dr. Thomas Walsh, President of UPF International, gave an overview of a series of conferences that gathered leaders of all sectors—political, religious, media, etc.—in 2015 to network and address key topics. He shared that the next International Leadership Conference will happen in Korea from February 12-16, the days surrounding True Parents’ birthday.

Dr. Walsh described True Mother’s emphasis on gathering leaders of parliament, religious leaders, journalists and NGO representatives for education, relationship-building, networking and meeting True Parents directly. The coming conference will address several issues including true family values, climate change, United Nations reforms and combatting religious extremism.

Stay tuned for more information on this upcoming conference.

Tribal Messiahship



Larry Moffitt gave a report of Tribal Messiahship best practices that are being implemented by Unificationists in the D.C.-Maryland-Virginia area. Weekly Divine Principle seminars are led by Dr. Michael Jenkins and the local ministry team. Even if no guests come, every meeting attendee will practice presenting Divine Principle concepts.

Another popular activity is door-to-door outreach. This practice promotes conversational skills and the confidence to meet new people.

A Life Tree Cafe meeting organized by Maryland Unificationist Henri Schauffler is a “come as you are, thoughts and doubts welcome” meeting where participants watch a video and then get into groups of four to go over discussion questions. These traditions create a lifestyle of outreach with the confidence that everyone is looking for God, and can gain something from the Divine Principle.

CARP Momentum 2016

Naokimi Ushiroda and Teresa Ferrete, President and Vice President of CARP USA, attended the National Ministry meeting despite being in the middle of holding a CARP Momentum workshop. They took this opportunity to invite their workshop participants to the meeting and demonstrate activities featured in their Momentum program.

Forty young people, including 10 international students, came to New York from all over the nation to build momentum for their communities. CARP believes in the power of young people to create a new culture, and their Momentum workshop offers the tools and skills to do just that. They emphasize seven core principles, each a phrase and concept inspired by Unification tenets about God, joy, humanity, freedom, maturity, relationships and society. These principles were the basis of an activity where each Momentum participant partnered with someone at the meeting and discussed the statements that resonated with them most.



Teresa also shared that this weekend marks the 50th anniversary of CARP and invited all to support the fundraiser banquet planned for 4 West 43rd St. tomorrow, January 9th. Events marking this milestone are being planned throughout the year, so stay tuned for more details.

Special Acknowledgements



Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of FFWPU USA, took this opportunity to relay several important acknowledgements. The first was a “Happy Birthday” to Dr. Kim and all those celebrating a birthday in January. A cake was shared while the new True Parents’ Birthday song played in the background.

Dr. Balcomb also gave a farewell message to Rev. David Rendel, who was Operations Manager for FFWPU USA HQ for over five years and played a crucial role in organizing the recent True Family Values Ministry programs in December. Rev. Rendel will now work closely with the ministry teams in Chicago, Columbus, Minneapolis and surrounding areas. The National Ministry team wishes Rev. Rendel well in his new role, and Dr. Kim and Dr. Balcomb presented him with an appreciation plaque for his years of service on the National Ministry Team.

We look forward to more exciting developments in 2016, and invite you to start the year with the celebration of our upcoming Holy Days.

