USA's National Ministry Team's first monthly meeting of the New Year, 2017

Michael Balcomb January 10, 2017



The National Ministry Team gathered together on January 10 for the first monthly meeting of the new year. In addition to reflecting back on and celebrating the victories and achievements of 2016, the team looked forward with excitement to the year ahead, sharing ministry and organization goals for 2017.

Miilhan Stephens, Vice President of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA, emceed the meeting, while Rev. Tom Corley of New York was invited to open the meeting in prayer.



Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of FFWPU USA, followed, reading his favorite verses in the Chambumo Gyeong for Hoon Dok Hwe (daily scripture reading, excerpted below):

"I could not meet the standard of the Messiah just by words. Nor could I meet it just because God blessed me to be the one. Although God had blessed me, I still had to establish the necessary foundation by substantiating His blessing. This meant that I had to reach the level where I could live with God and be in the realm where God and I were relating as equals. When I had secured this in reality, I could receive the inheritance and the title of "Messiah." I could inherit everything from God by reaching the level of equal participation, equal position, and living together with Him. He had to recognize me by saying, "Certainly you are the True Parent; certainly you are the Messiah.

"I had to become like a lighthouse that gives out light to ships in the night. As a lighthouse lights up the darkness so that ships can find their way with certainty, the Messiah must be able to shine a bright light into a world engulfed in darkness, a light that shines no matter how dark it is." –Chambumo Gyeong, pp. 50-51



Dr. Balcomb continued with a brief but poignant reflection from his recent trip with American leaders to celebrate the New Year with True Mother in Korea. After breakfast one day, True Mother invited everyone to drive around Hyojeong Cheonwon (HJ Cheonwon) and effectively gave a guided tour of the sites where coffee houses, hotels, cultural centers, a museum dedicated to True Parents, and more will be built in coming years to develop the area. Wondering about how he would share the joy and excitement of True Mother's vision for HJ Cheonwon with Unificationists back home, Dr. Balcomb realized that True Mother is building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth where she is, and that that is her challenge and her message to all Unificationists as well: to build the Kingdom of Heaven wherever we are, however we can.



Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Chairman of FFWPU North America, gave a more in-depth presentation and report about the New Year's celebration with True Mother, sharing about her gracious hospitality to him and her sincere appreciation of the American movement's efforts and investments during 2016, particularly during her recent trip to Washington, D.C. and New York in early December. Dr. Kim concluded his comments by sharing his reflections from True Mother's New Year's message to Unificationists around the world: "It is time to build a foundation and create the environment for the sake of True Parents. True Parents, like Jesus 2000 years ago, must stand on foundation of a nation in order to reach the world." Dr. Kim likened the current historical moment to the Korean War, an unfinished battle for the high ground, where the side who successful claims the high ground now will be the victors in the war for humankind's spirit and soul.

"In a Chicago Tribune article last weekend, I read this valuable advice. Make a resolution list for yourself each night, not just once a year but for the day ahead, and stick to that list....Every night, go to bed with prayer and have a great outcome."

(Video Coming Soon)



The directors of the three major departments of the National Ministry Team and of our affiliate organizations, Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), shared their goals for 2017.



Demian Dunkley, National Director of Evangelism, began by outlining what it means to be an associate member of the Family Federation, and by calling on each and every one of us to rise up and take on the responsibility of connecting with like-minded and –hearted people around us. Citing True Parents'

teachings and current seminary research about what it takes to raise someone up spiritually, Demian stated that it is up to us to incorporate the spirit and the ethos of Tribal Messiahship into the cultural DNA of our movement.



Crescentia DeGoede, National Director of the Blessing and Family Ministry (BFM) followed, sharing at the outset her hope to inspire Unificationists this year to share the blessings we have received with others. Acknowledging the difficulties we may face as individuals, families, and communities in this movement, Crescentia encouraged us all to face our challenges together and with God, with care and love. "To bless others, we need to feel blessed ourselves—to really feel and know that we are blessed by God." Crescentia invited everyone to reach out and also to reach in: into ourselves, our families, and to reconnect with God in these most important arenas of our lives.



Naokimi Ushiroda, President of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) America, reflected on his experience at the New Year's celebration with True Mother and CARP America's determination to continue strengthening international connections with CARP chapters around the world, before turning the floor over to Tasnah Moyer and Teresa Rischl, National Program Director of

CARP America, who respectively shared about primary takeaways from a nationwide fact-finding tour undertaken by CARP representatives during the course of 2016, and upcoming opportunities for youth and young adults to grow in heart and get involved in 2017.



Bruce Grodner, the newly appointed National Executive Director of ACLC, shared the ongoing vision of ACLC to "Rebuild the Family, Restore the Community, Renew the Nation and the World," as well as the organizations outreach and inreach goals in 2017. In addition to involving more young people in the events and initiatives of ACLC, the organization looks forward to creating an interfaith service task force, serving and caring for churches and communities in tangible and meaningful ways.



Angelika Selle, President of WFWP USA, and Katarina Connery, Vice President of WFWP USA, collaboratively shared the spiritual and the practical goals of Women's Federation in the year ahead, committing to grow in prayer, to deepen study of True Mother's vision for the organization, "not [as] another organization for women's rights but [as] a providential organization called to solve social ills and heal the heart of God," and to improve their leadership skills; while also expanding outreach efforts, creating educational resources, and establishing greater financial sustainability.



Mr. Hiroshi Inose, Cheon II Guk IW and Chairman of Kodan, also shared about the two Japanese Revival workshops scheduled for mid- and late January. Attendance for the first workshop has almost doubled from its original limit of 120 participants, while another 80 people are currently enrolled to attend the second workshop. Mr. Inose expressed deep thanks and enthusiasm for this upcoming opportunity for Japanese members of the Unification movement.



Many members of the National Ministry Team were deeply moved by their recent meeting with True Mother for New Year's, and their reflections were interspersed throughout the monthly meeting. Tom McDevitt, Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA and Dr. Thomas Walsh, President of UPF International, both shared deep and heartfelt reflections about True Mother's messages to the worldwide movement and her vision for the movement and the world moving forward.



Mr. McDevitt urged everyone to pay close attention to everything True Mother says, describing his insight from Korea that True Mother is the Moses of the current era, and making the prescient analogy of the great victories received by the Israelites when they heeded Moses' words, as well as the strife and difficulties the Israelites faced when they disregarded Moses' words.



Dr. Walsh, in turn, offered hopeful reflections about the possibility to achieve real unity in this era. "Never lose sight of how important our work is. As you look around the world...you can see that the fruit of our investment and True Parents' investment is starting to pay off. I've never seen the level of cooperation and collaboration for unit that is now emerging."



The meeting concluded with a birthday celebration for everyone born in January, including our very own Dr. Kim, and four cheers of og mansei (victory) to usher in the New Year with the conviction and the compassion needed to bring about God's vision for 2017 and beyond.