

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Blooming Hope in EUME Central Region

Michael Balcomb

May 13, 2026



### Slovenia - Leadership Transition Ceremony

On May 10, in a beautiful resonance with the spirit "Passing the Flame", the Slovenian community gathered recently for a momentous transition ceremony. The event marked a sacred bridge between chapters: honoring the profound legacy of Alfred and Janine Waldmann while enthusiastically welcoming a new era of leadership.

The atmosphere was one of deep spiritual significance, blending the reverence of a formal transition with the warmth of a family reunion.

The heart of the ceremony was defined by heartfelt testimonies from community members. One by one, voices rose to express deep-seated gratitude for Alfred and Janine. Their years of service were characterized by a tireless commitment to the growth of the community. A legacy of love that has nurtured both the spiritual and personal lives of many and serving as a North Star for the Slovenian family through various seasons of change.

The "Passing of the Flame" was not just a symbolic gesture but a practical commission. The leadership has now transitioned to SunWoo and Radoslav Irgl, supported by a dynamic committee of first- and second-generation members. This multi-generational team embodies a synergy of experience and youthful energy: SunWoo Irgl, Radoslav Irgl, Reiko Kitič, Kristian Irgl, Jakob Bratkovič

The event was graced by the presence of EUME Sub-Directors Dieter and Anna Schmidt, whose attendance underscored the regional importance of this transition. Members from both the Slovenian and

Klagenfurt communities in Austria joined together, weaving a tapestry of international solidarity.

The transition was celebrated with vibrant energy and communal joy. Beautiful performances that lifted the spirits of everyone in attendance. The traditional cake cutting and a bountiful potluck lunch provided a space for laughter and personal connection. While the "Passing the Flame" signaled the end of an era, the overwhelming sentiment was one of hope and renewed vision.

"We don't just pass a torch; we ignite a collective fire. Today, we carry forward the love of the past into the promise of the future."

The Slovenian community moves forward with a clear sense of purpose, deeply rooted in the foundation laid by the Waldmanns and inspired by the fresh vision of the new leadership committee. The flame is burning bright.



### **Hungary - "Blooming Hope" Concert in Budapest**

On Sunday, April 26th, the vibrant energy of spring took root in the heart of Hungary as the second-generation youth hosted the second Hungarian Worship Concert in Budapest. Inspired by the profound spirit of the worship programs led by Shin Chul Nim in Albania, this gathering served as a powerful testament to the healing power of music, faith, and community.

The organizers chose the theme "Blooming Hope" to mirror the natural world's transition from the stillness of winter to the vitality of spring. It was designed to be more than just a concert; it was a symbolic movement toward shaking off the "cold winter" of past difficulties, cultivating a fresh internal environment for spiritual growth and igniting a proactive passion within the youth to lead the community forward.

The event saw a remarkable turnout of 105 attendees, representing a diverse tapestry of our community. Most notably, the audience included new guests discovering the warmth of our movement for the first time, core families coming together to support the rising generation and distant members who had become disconnected over time due to past conflicts, personal disappointments, or life's many hurdles.

This inclusive atmosphere was a direct response to True Mother's heartfelt request to leave no one behind. The youth aimed to build a bridge of reconciliation, creating a safe, "no-judgment" zone where those who felt separated could return and experience the embrace of a loving family once again.

The "Blooming Hope" concert proved that when we lead with culture and heart, barriers naturally dissolve. The music served as a universal language, mending old wounds and replacing them with a shared sense of purpose.

"Just as the flower does not struggle to grow but simply opens to the sun, this event allowed our community to open their hearts to True Mother's love and the promise of a new beginning."

By looking toward the example set in Albania and tailoring it to the Hungarian spirit, our youth have shown that they are not just the future of this movement - they are its current, beating heart. The "Blooming Hope" concert has planted seeds of unity that will undoubtedly yield a harvest of peace and growth for years to come.



### **Italy - Family Festival in Bergamo**

On Sunday, May 10, 2026, the F. de Andrè Auditorium in Bergamo was transformed into a sanctuary of light and joy. The 2026 Family Festival served as a profound offering to Heavenly Parent and True Parents, marking a milestone of spiritual renewal and communal unity.

The heart of the festival was the True Parents' Blessing, a sacred rite that transcended mere tradition to become a living testimony of love. Several couples stepped forward to receive the Blessing, including seven guest couples who joined our community for this providential moment. The atmosphere was electrified by the performances of the Holy BandIT, whose music bridged the gap between the earthly and

the divine, keeping the energy vibrant and the hearts of the audience open.

One of the most remarkable achievements of the day was the balance of spirit curated by the Bergamo community. The program successfully navigated the delicate line between deeply moving moments of prayer and commitment that honored the sanctity of the Blessing.

This environment allowed the grace of the True Parents to flow naturally, making the profound concepts of the Blessing accessible and heartfelt for all in attendance.

The seeds planted in Bergamo this May will undoubtedly grow into a harvest of peace and strengthened lineages. Let us carry this momentum forward, multiplying the joy of the Blessing in our daily lives!



### **Hungary - Heavenly Top Gun Missionary Activities in Pécs**

A vibrant new wave of international outreach has taken root in the historic city of Pécs. Since their arrival at the end of January, the Heavenly Top Gun missionaries have become a steady fixture in the local community, bridging cultural divides through a unique blend of spiritual devotion and social engagement.

What began as a quiet arrival in mid-winter quickly evolved into a bustling schedule of community-building. Starting in February, the group implemented a rigorous dual-approach: pairing traditional daily witnessing and lectures with high-energy monthly events designed to foster "Shimjeong" - a Korean concept referring to the "heart" or "irrepressible impulse to love."

The missionaries have successfully hosted two major events each month, showcasing international traditions to local residents, Shimjeong Workshops focused on emotional intelligence and spiritual

connection and engaging the public through casual picnics and cinema nights.

The group's impact hasn't been limited to their own circles. Demonstrating a spirit of ecumenical cooperation, the Heavenly Top Gun members have actively participated in gatherings hosted by other local religious organizations. These interactions have provided a platform for the missionaries to connect with youth from across the globe, exchanging perspectives on faith and modern challenges.

In just ninety days, the team has managed to navigate the complexities of Hungarian culture and language. Beyond the numbers, the missionaries report a profound personal transformation, citing the "valuable experiences in the art of giving and the humility of accepting."

"We came here to share a message, but we have learned just as much from the people of Pécs," said one member of the delegation. "Overcoming the initial cultural hurdles has only made the bonds we've formed stronger."

As the spring season continues, the Heavenly Top Gun missionaries show no signs of slowing down, proving that sincere heart-to-heart connection remains a powerful force in an increasingly digital world.