

WFWP Leaders visit the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of WFWP

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The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of WFWP received a great blessing with the visit of **WFWP USA President Angelika Selle, Vice President Katarina Connery, and Dr. Linda Lucero Nishikawa, newly appointed WFWP West Coast Regional Director**, on May 18 to the 21st. They spoke at 6 different events or meetings over the weekend and many people were inspired by their message, as well as how well they worked together as an intergenerational team.



The busy weekend started on Friday evening when Mrs. Selle addressed the local **CARP (Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles) Chapter**, giving those in attendance (college students or recent graduates) so much inspiration. Please see the next article for a few more details and several

reflections.

Then, on Saturday morning Angelika spoke at the Community of Faith Breakfast. A recurring theme for the weekend was the important of forgiveness. **She said we have to forgive the unforgivable and embrace all people in order to bring healing to this world and to ourselves.**



On Saturday afternoon, a Bridge of Peace event was held at the beautiful home of WFWP member Siew Lian LeRoy, in the hills of Oakland. Many races and nationalities were represented in the 50 women who attended the program. The theme of the event was Uplift, Collaborate, and Transform. **Mrs. Selle introduced a part of the new Bridge of Peace curriculum that is being developed. She spoke about how we all have so much pain in our hearts, but we also have creativity to overcome the pain. The real work is changing ourselves because we cannot change anyone else. We have to forgive even the unforgivable. The purpose of the Bridge of Peace is to break the cycle of hate, hurt, and pain. If we don't do it no one else will. We have to forgive not only the small things that happened in our daily lives but also the most difficult things.**



A deeply moving moment happened when Mrs. Connery was sharing her experience growing up in southern Louisiana. **She very tearfully expressed her deep regret that, as a white person, she couldn't**

understand what black people went through. Many women had tears in their eyes listening to her sharing. Dr. Lucero, who is of Native American background shared, “I felt great joy through the Bridge of Peace Ceremony. **Katarina’s testimony opened my heart and brought healing.** Then I felt I want to be different. I want to give my ‘sister’ acceptance as God’s daughter. I want to have an open heart.”



We should be following Dr. Moon’s example. When we live for God, we stay young. We must hold a positive attitude amidst the tears and suffering. Great leader inspires others. **Many people get bogged down with the problems of this world, but WFWP members must give hope to others, and we must implement what we talk about.** We have to think of the oppressed and care about them. Being silent is not the answer. We need to take responsibility. We have to do something.

With that in mind, one new element to the Bridge of Peace Ceremony was the call to action. We can’t just talk about peace and forgiveness, we have act in concrete ways to bring it about. Angelika spoke very movingly about WFWP Founders, Reverend Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who lived their whole lives for the sake of loving and serving others. **All the “sister” pairs who crossed the Bridge of Peace together were called upon to do something together to promote peace and healing.**

For some, this was a challenging idea. Others were excited about it. Monika Kellett said, “It’s good because we’re asked to put our ideas into action. That’s what it’s all about. The important thing is to put things into action.” One sister pair announced that they will host a tea for the other pairs as their action step, which is planned for June 9th.

On Sunday morning, Mrs. Selle and Mrs. Connery presented the Sunday sermon at the Bay Area Family Church, where they shared about the precious value of our founder, Dr. Moon, and how difficult her path has been.

Later that afternoon and evening, the WFWP Northern California planning committee had time to get to know Mrs. Selle, Mrs. Connery, and Dr. Lucero better and share many thoughts and ideas about how to develop our chapter. It was a very precious and meaningful time together.

Reflections from the weekend

Monika Kellett, WFWP Northern California committee member, shared: “I was so moved by the sincerity of Mrs. Selle and Mrs. Connery as they highlighted that the goals we have cannot be reached by human power. It is only in deep connection to God that these great tasks can be fulfilled. **So the key to our success lies in having a greater commitment and desire to let God work through us.**”

Another participant shared that she came to a much deeper understanding of the importance of the work WFWP is doing through attending the events this weekend.

Sachiko Sato, WFWP committee member, reflected: “I was impressed to see God work through Mrs.

Selle's and Mrs. Connery's unity and their love for Mother Moon. **This is the era to forgive, love, and unite: to forgive and forget the past, overcome differences and love unconditionally.** I'm grateful for Mrs. Selle, Mrs. Connery, and Dr. Lucero for coming to the Bay Area and reviving us spiritually and physically.”



A WFWP member, **Gale White**, shared the following reflection for the event on Sunday:

I found the event to be very interesting and the host most hospitable. I do like the idea that peace in the world begins within each of us. I consider myself a person open to diversity and have an array of friends and associates of various backgrounds and cultures. However, the concept of ‘forgiveness’ of the horrors of slavery put upon persons of African-American decent in this country for several hundred years is a hard pill to swallow, and one I am not yet open to.

However, I appreciate the spirit of the event. **I do believe that if peace is to ever become a reality in this world, women will be at the forefront of the efforts, as the bridge and the negotiators to bring it about.** Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this event and meet the wonderful women who were present that day!

