

Detroit and Dearborn Faith and Civic Leaders Pray to Save the Family

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A group of 50 clergy and concerned community leaders from the Detroit-Dearborn area gathered to seek God's help in restoring His original institution, the family.

“Marriage: A Candle in Every Window,” which was subtitled “Spring Prayer Assembly for the Family,” took place on Monday, June 1, 2015, at the Detroit-Dearborn DoubleTree Hotel.



The prayer event was sponsored by the interfaith group American Clergy Leadership Conference in partnership with the social action group Defending Our Father's House. The theme of the program was the candle as a symbol for marriage, which brings light to the world.

To begin the meeting, representatives of four faiths each read from their Scripture, spoke a few words of comment, prayed and then lit a candle. Rev. Willie Downer, pastor of Greater Love Baptist Church, along with his wife, after reading from the New Testament's Epistle to the Ephesians, stated it is clear that God created husbands and wives to serve each other. Imam Mohammad Elahi of House of Wisdom Mosque reflected on Mohammad's statements that traditional marriage is the closest institution to God and the one most hated by Satan. He said that this work of struggling to save the family is a real *jihad* (holy war or crusade). He called for a "Christian-Muslim jihad" in this effort.

Rev. Priscilla Tucker, chief executive officer of the Metropolitan Christian Council, reminded those present that men and women are meant to walk side by side in their marriage relationships. Rev. Sidney Griffin, pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church, along with his wife, urged pastors to put marriage first; he preached that couples must be one, as God intended them to be.

The keynote address was given by Dr. Nick Phillips of Northridge Church, who spoke about the marriage ministry that he leads. He recalled the loneliness he experienced for years as his parents fought. This eventually led him to look for solutions to marital conflict. What he found was mentoring. He spoke of the hope that couples experience when they are willing to be mentored and guided. He read the testimonies of couples who tore up their divorce papers and others who reconciled even after serious conflicts. He used the candle as a symbol to remind all the participants that marriage is a light for children as well as for a world in darkness.

The program concluded with all the participants holding candles and joining in a circle of prayer to seek God's healing power for couples who are troubled, couples living together outside marriage and young people as they move into relationships. Discussions held over lunch led to plans for future work in this mission of marriage ministry.

Dr. Michael Ross, founder of the co-sponsor Defending Our Father's House, said of the event, "Today we ignited a flame of hope in the heart of Michigan's greatest city."

