

## No. Virginia Family Church's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast honors an Islamic festival

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More than 30 people from different faiths and backgrounds attended an Interfaith Prayer Breakfast on August 18 that honored Eid al-Adha, the Islamic festival commemorating Abraham's sacrifice. The Interfaith Prayer Breakfast seeks to bring together men and women of different faith traditions to experience the power of common prayer.

The event was held at the Northern Virginia (NOVA) Family Church's Learning Center in Fairfax, VA and was organized by the Virginia chapter of American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLIC) and sponsored by the local chapters of Universal Peace Federation and Women's Federation for World Peace.

The gathering started off with prayers from different faiths. Bishop John Allen, Sr., founder of the Greater Pentecostal Temple of Christ located in Fairfax represented Christianity. Minister Amar Nath Gupta, a senior priest at the Rajdhani Mandir temple in Chantilly represented Hinduism, and Brother Mohammad Rasool Tahiry of the Islamic Center of Culpeper represented Islam. The clergy prayed for greater unity and mutual respect to counter the social and spiritual forces that try to divide us.

Mrs. Michiko Yokoyama, the coordinator of the Virginia chapter of ACLIC briefed the participants about the organization's activities since last year when True Mother invited 200 U.S. clergy to Korea and invited 400 more clergy to a huge rally for peace. More than 80,000 attended from around the world. At that time, True Mother called on the religious leaders to pray for peace and for the reunification of the

Korean Peninsula. Mrs. Yokoyama said it was True Mother's pronouncement of "Peace Starts With Me" that inspired her to renew her commitment to do interfaith outreach.

One of the speakers, Father Bayo Adrian, the community pastor of the Richmond International Family Center said, "We must love each other as our neighbor and recognize that we are each a child of God and therefore a member of God's family." The essence of ACLC, he explained, is all about the family. Father Bayo then invited all the participants, regardless of their faith or tradition, to join hands with ACLC and celebrate together the joy of God.



Another speaker, Muhammad Irfan Qureshi, a community leader of Islamic prayer said that Ibrahim (Abraham) was "not a Christian nor a Jew; he was a firm believer and obedient to his God." Eid al-Adha celebrates the willingness of both the father and son to make the ultimate sacrifice in obedience to God's command. He also described the holiday tradition of dividing food into three parts: one third for the poor; one third for relatives, friends and neighbors; and the remaining third for the family.

The last part of the program was dedicated to the Marriage Blessing toast. William and Donna Selig, the officiating couple, invited everyone to partake of the Holy Juice symbolizing reaffirmation and renewal of our commitment to God and our spouses. Rev. Werner Seubert, pastor of the NOVA Family Church concluded the spirit-filled morning with words of encouragement and a closing prayer which was followed by group photos and much fellowship.