

## FFWPU USA: Pastors Nadeem and Romina Rahman in Arizona and New Mexico

Naokimi Ushiroda  
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*Photos courtesy of Pastor Nadeem Rahman*

In the Southwest, family-oriented events have built a stronger sense of community among Unificationists in Arizona and New Mexico. Pastors Nadeem and Romina Rahman, who were appointed district leaders in 2021 overseeing both states, have focused on cultivating a warm environment where members and their guests feel welcomed.



"I was born in New Mexico and raised in Arizona, so I have an affinity for both places," said Pastor

Nadeem, as he shared an update from his community in a FFWPU USA leaders meeting Oct. 18. "Our district is very geared toward community building and community events."

In Flagstaff, Ariz., young families recently went to a local pumpkin patch where they enjoyed fall festivities together. There was also a pumpkin festival held at the Arizona Family Church with painting and pumpkin carving, among other activities.



"A bunch of the little kids painted," said Pastor Nadeem, "and then we had a carving contest between the families to see who could carve the best pumpkin ... We have young families that come because of our community events. These couples come because of their kids, and they want to be part of the community."

Pastor Nadeem said even couples who are loosely connected with the Unification movement stay involved through community activities. "Our [district pastors] have been doing a great job serving their Arizona community and giving a lot of support," said Izak Hernandez, secretary general of FFWPU USA South. "They even sometimes visit and provide care for our New Mexico families."

The Rahman couple recently traveled to Albuquerque to spend time with community members there. "They had their first official gathering - held at the local church center - since the Covid-19 pandemic began," said Pastor Nadeem. "A lot of people from different generations joined us. It was really a blast to see everybody and get together and just share our hearts with one another."

Pastor Nadeem said he particularly admires the New Mexico community's acceptance of everyone despite various differences among people. "You can see everyone really praising God and True Parents together," he said. "It's very remarkable to see that and such a loving environment."

The pandemic, which paused large gatherings, created substantial distance in close-knit communities like Albuquerque. "Many people hadn't seen each other in such a long time," said Pastor Nadeem, "so this was a great get-together to be one with the community."

More Unificationist leaders are fostering greater community relations through engaging events and programs that create opportunities to bond. This year, FFWPU USA leaders have aimed to [empower](#) families and communities as they seek to nationally increase Sunday service attendance, tithing, Divine Principle study, and preparation for the Marriage Blessing.

National

## Empowering Families: A Mission and Vision



A consolidated outline of the 2022 mission, vision, objectives, goals and strategies of FFWPU USA were presented in a special report by President Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda on Sept. 20. “Our mission is to advance world peace by *empowering families* to develop their four realms of heart and establish the blessed family culture through True Parents’ teachings,” he said.

Focusing on the four realms of heart – children, sibling, conjugal, and parental – has helped clarify all the different types of education provided by the U.S. movement, Rev. Naokimi said, and underscores the primary mission to empower families. “When we fulfill our mission, we will see our vision emerge of a peaceful world where every family embodies God’s true love,” he said. “This is something that True Parents brought to us that we are still responsible to manifest in our own families and in all families throughout the world.”

Rev. Naokimi identified in his report four main objectives, or ‘long term pillars,’ that circle back to relationships: Empowering individuals to develop a personal relationship with God and True Parents and fulfill the three great Blessings; empowering couples to create a God-centered marriage through the holy Marriage Blessing;

empowering parents to raise their children with love and the *Divine Principle*; and lastly, empowering tribal messiahs and community leaders to expand the blessed family culture and create a unified, peaceful world through community service.

"All of our activities related to [FFWPU USA] should fall under these four categories," he said. "We also have short-term goals that fall under our immediate providential focus." By April 2023, Rev.

Naokimi said U.S. leaders aim to go to Korea with the substantial offering of a breakthrough in church growth. "This is something that has really been on True Mother's heart, and she has guided us since May of this year to focus on our local church development. We're focusing all of our resources toward breaking through in this particular area."

Over the next seven months, leaders aim to have at least 3,000 members regularly attend Sunday service nationally, read the *Divine Principle* one-hour manual a hundred times each, have at least 400 new FFWPU USA members, increase tithing by 50 percent, and prepare 210 singles from America for the next Cosmic Blessing.

"Each of our subregions have committed to a certain portion of the goals," said Rev. Naokimi before explaining that, aside from California – which has the Bay Area and Los Angeles – the major city in each region would be responsible for their results. He said past outreach campaigns, like the Online Holy Communities (OHCs), have been successfully evolving and will continue on that trend.

"We actually achieved more than 120 new signed memberships during the New Life Campaign that was started earlier this year," said Rev. Naokimi. This goal was slated for the August anniversary of True Father's seonghwa. "That was a great victory," he said. "By April 2023, we can get to 400 or more."

The Clifton Family Church in New Jersey, where Rev. Naokimi and Dr. Chung Sik Yong pastor, was highlighted as an example community where "small group care training" – through the Dare to Care workshop and Achieve program – has been used to increase Sunday service attendance. "We had more than a hundred people come and receive training and education with a newfound

come and receive training and education, with a newfound commitment to invest in a handful of other people ... and really invite them to participate in our community," he said.

Large quarterly services akin to a 'friends and family day' have also proved successful. And new programs celebrating eternal love and married couples, as well as a "clear track" to FFWPU USA membership have created an uptick in community participation, too. Rev. Naokimi concluded by emphasizing the importance of clarifying a new member's commitment and what that entails.

"These are the things we have developed to focus on growth in our local churches," he said. "This is what we're working on in Clifton, and it can be implemented by all the other regions across the country."

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