

UPF-International's Prayer Rally for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

Thomas G. Walsh
December 5, 2021



An end of the year global "Prayer Rally for Peace on the Korean Peninsula" was held December 5, 2021. The gathering was a prayer call for God to bring healing and restoration to the peninsula, which has been divided since the end of World War II. The hybrid event combined both remote and in-person attendance at the Cheongshim Peace World Center located about 20 miles outside Seoul, Korea. UPF sponsored the program which was attended by more than one million peacemakers from around the world.



Dr. Young-ho Yoon, Secretary-General of the FFWPU International HQ, served as the emcee. Dr. Yoon said, "The two Koreas remain divided but the separation is based on man-centered thought, so the solution is to apply a God-centered approach." He reminded the audience that it was on December 6, 1991, 30 years ago, that UPF's founders met North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung and opened the door towards the peaceful reunification of the peninsula.

Dr. Yoon announced that UPF will host World Summit 2022 in Seoul, Korea on February 10-14, 2022 with the theme, "Toward Peace on the Korean Peninsula." The Summit will include a one-million-person rally with representatives from the 157 countries with diplomatic ties to both Koreas.

Next on the program was a Unity Water Ceremony and prayers by interfaith leaders. Forty-two religious leaders participated on the stage in the reverent ceremony.

The welcome address was given by Pastor Paula White, spiritual advisor to former U.S. President Donald Trump. She stated: "I am honored to participate in this historic prayer rally for the unification of the Korean peninsula." Pastor White explained the Greek word, apokatastasis, meaning, "restoration," to describe God's work. "I believe God is restoring and reconstituting His people to His original intention." She also compared these times to when Joshua led the people to march around the walls of Jericho. Similarly, "if faith leaders are united, then our prayers will go to heaven as a great shout," and the man-made walls that divide us will come down.



Brief congratulatory video messages came from around the world, including: Hon. Newt Gingrich, Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, who expressed his hope for the unification of Korea.

H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, Former President of the Republic of Nigeria, who said, "This prayer assembly is highly commendable. It is what the world needs now. Let us work for lasting peace."

Sincere messages for the peaceful reunification were received from a host of distinguished leaders, including the following:

Bishop Charles A. Hall, Founding Pastor, Prelate of Christian Ministries Far East, Japan
Chief Priest Yoshihiko Kaminaga, Christian Pastor, Japan
Archbishop Chrysostomos Celi, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Orthodox Church of Ecuador and Latin America
Bishop Luiz Edson, Founder, Church of the Married Founders, Brazil
Humahyun A. Muhgal, Islamic Critic and International Journalist, Japan
Prof. Singh Sahib Manjit Singh, Sikh Leader from Punjab State, India
Dharmacharya Keshab Prasad Chaulagain, Secretary, Interfaith Council of Nepal
Pastor Pavel Levushkan of the Lutheran Church of Latvia
Ms. Seema Khan, Chairperson, Nepal Muslim Women Welfare Society, Nepal
Father Albert Smith, Roman Catholic Priest, Soufriere Parish, St. Lucia
Bishop Joseph Atherly, Christian Union Church of the Caribbean, Barbados
Mrs. Mariam Kovaleva, Member of the Council of Ulema (Islamic Scholars)
Rabbi Akiva Simja Fishman, Rabbi of the Jewish Community of Nicaragua

During the deeply moving prayer rally, three peace performances, including the famous Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet and the Art Bul-I Troupe, provided entertainment for the heart and soul.

Other prominent world leaders representing more than 80 denominations in the 157 countries which have diplomatic relations with the two Koreas, expressed messages of peace and hope for a unified Korea, via video:

(Protestantism) Bishop Munib Younan, Former President of the Lutheran World Federation, and Sunhak Peace Prize Laureate (2020), pointed out that Korea is unique in being a majority Christian nation within Asia. He called on civil society and faith-based organizations to take action.

[Click here for the message of Bishop Munib Younan in the Prayer Rally for Peace](#)

(Catholicism) His Eminence Cardinal Kelvin Felix, Cardinal Archbishop Emeritus of Castries, Dominica,

prayed that the two Koreas would "live and work together as two lungs of the same body... may peace and harmony breathe among us as this is His mission for us."

(Catholicism) Monseigneur Jacques Gaillot, Catholic Bishop of Partenia, France, prayed that with the sons and daughters of Abraham, with other believers and all people of good will, we will be able to tear down the walls that separate and remove the obstacles that prevent progress.

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(Islam) Prof. Dr. K.H. Nassarudin Umar, Grand Imam, Istiqlal, National Mosque, Indonesia, said the problem of the peninsula affects the entire region, therefore, "we all must work together to resolve the resentment and bring about a peaceful nation, region and world. I pray for heavenly guidance and wisdom to open the door of unification and peace on the Korean peninsula."



(Shintoism) Rev. Tokushu Murei, representing Japanese Shintoism, offered a prayer for the divided nations of the peninsula to become one.

(Hinduism) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Gurudev, Founder of the Art of Living Foundation, a humanitarian and educational NGO in Bangalore, India, said, "Whenever there is harmony among diversity, there is peace." He expressed his gratitude to "those who are bringing peace and smiles to the faces of the Korean family. Let us celebrate the one world family."

(Revelation Church) Prophet Samuel Radebe, Founder and Head of Revelation Church of God, South Africa, said 10 million people in Africa have joined this movement to pray for the reunification of the Korean peninsula. The way to overcome the challenges that we face begins when we invite Heavenly Parent into our hearts.

(Buddhism) Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Khy Sovanratana, Acting Rector, Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University, Kingdom of Cambodia, testified to the importance of unity among religious leaders and hope that the reunification of the Korean peninsula may be achieved soon.

Dr. Yoon thanked the religious leaders for "going beyond their religions," and bringing messages of hope and reconciliation. The 2nd set of prayers were from four religious leaders based in Korea:

(Buddhism) Monk Ho-myeong

(Christianity) Pastor Kim Yeong-wan

(Islam) Dr. Hussein Kim Dong-eok

(Unificationism) Rev. Lee Gi-seong

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Co-founder, UPF and Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, shared her message and hope for peace. "In all areas of society, we can see division. Today's world is characterized by selfishness. In particular, due to the COVID pandemic, in many aspects freedom of communication and understanding are being lost. The superpowers are seeking their own agenda and underdeveloped nations are facing greater challenges each day." Dr. Moon said it is time for all religions to converge together. She said, "It feels like many streams and waterways are coming together into a tremendous river that flows into the vast ocean. Likewise, fallen humanity today is being guided by religions to unite as one to understand the true essence of the Creator."

She recalled her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, who felt called to come to America as a "firefighter to fight the moral decay that was consuming the nation.... God did not bless America for its own sake but so America could guide other nations back to God.... The mission of religious leaders is to bring humanity back to God's bosom." She exhorted everyone to "be bold, courageous, and march forward. It is my hope that you will join me.... I dressed in green today because green signifies hope. Let us unite in hope and action." She also spoke about the need to take care of the environment. "If we unite as one, we can fix the problems afflicting the world and return the world to its pristine state." Lastly, she said human history has been characterized by chauvinism. "The time has come for change. Women preachers have the heart of the mother and can convey God's heart to His children."

Pastor White and Prof. Yun Ah Moon, chair of UPF-Korea, offered flowers and gifts on behalf of the gathering and in honor of the 30th anniversary of the historic visit to North Korea.

The three-hour program concluded with everyone singing the Unification Holy Song, Urie So Wonun Tongil, which translates as "Our cherished hopes are for unity, even our dreams are for unity, we'd give our lives for unity, come along unity."



This is the highlights video (approx. 45 mins.)



This is the full video recording (approx. 3 hours)



Message of Bishop Munib Younan in the Prayer Rally for Peace

Written by Bishop Munib Younan, Former President of the Lutheran World Federation

05 December 2021



It was a great honour for me to visit Korea a few times, in various capacities. The last time was the summit of 2020 in Seoul. As an Arab Palestinian Christian visiting that beautiful country of Korea, I found myself asking once again why do world leaders offer lip service to peace and justice, but never rise up to the challenge of implementing peace, justice, and unity? I thank Dr Hak Ja Han Moon, the Universal Peace Federation and the Christian Leadership Conference for sponsoring such an important prayer rally for the unity of Korea.

Korea has a long and rich history; it has been called the hermit kingdom and the land of the morning calm. Although they share one language, one country and one history today the Korean people are still divided without any kind of peace treaty.

Many families have not seen one another since the Korean war. Tensions have remained on high alert.

In recent weeks, we have seen a rise in cross border hostility. The land of the morning calm has become a political flashpoint.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has developed nuclear capabilities and shows no sign of denuclearization, even as its people suffer serious economic hardship and human rights abuses. Efforts by the US, China, Japan, and other nations, to reduce tension, foster dialogue and forge a path to unity have all been ineffective.

Korea is unique in being a majority Christian nation within Asia. This is the result of the influence of Protestant and Catholic missionaries, but also of the fervour with which the Korean people embrace the Gospel. This has been very seldom in other parts of the world. The two Koreas are a legacy of the cold war and the brutal struggle between democracy and communism which affected many nations.

The south Korean leadership has made many gestures toward unity, but the aggressive rhetoric of north Korea has not abated, just as in Israel and Palestine. If we want to do more than give lip service to justice and unity, there will need to be coordinated efforts from the major superpowers and other world leaders, civil society and faith-based organisations to take action. It seems a huge task, but there is no other way forward for the people of Korea and the Korean peninsula than unity and justice. Koreans deserve to be liberated from their long struggle. They, along with every people of every nation, deserve a future of unity, peace and justice. If there is a will, there is a way.

One of the Koreans challenged me in a press conference, saying, bishop, if Koreans unite, then South Korea will lose the economic growth they have just achieved. My answer was simple; let us learn from the example of Germany. Once the Berlin wall fell apart, the same question was raised; however, the German leaders were very wise and united Germany under one Federal German Republic. And we can see today that, because of this unity, Germany has become one of the major world economic powers.

The same thing will happen with the Korean peninsula. Once they decide to unite, then neither Korea will need any kind of weapons, neither nuclear weapons, nor any newly developed ones. Weapons only create fear, destroy life, and create disunity. Only peace, unity and understanding will always build life, security and common wellbeing. I dream of the one united Korea that will be much stronger politically, economically and socially worldwide.

Let us pray that our Triune God may hear the cries of the divided Korea and that Christ, who is the light of the world, may shine his light on the Korean leaders, so that they will unite the Koreans in one nation, and they will be reminded

that unity is always God's will. May Christ also touch the broken hearts of the divided families and give them comfort and, for those who are oppressed, may the Holy Spirit lead the local and world leaders to peace based on justice and reconciliation based on forgiveness.

We pray this in the name of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen

Pray for the unity of Korea and may God bless all of you.

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Message of Monseigneur Jacques Gaillot in the Prayer Rally for Peace

Written by Monseigneur Jacques Gaillot, Catholic Bishop of Partenia, France

📅 05 December 2021



Something happened one day in November 2017 while we were gathered in the Olympic Stadium in Seoul. It was a cold day and the wind was freezing. Someone came to pick me up to take me to the place where I was to address prayer intentions that I had been asked to prepare. In an impressive silence, I addressed the first prayer to God in French, which was immediately translated into other languages. The crowd agreed, making their own these words of peace, reconciliation, and unity for Korea. We were all beggars for peace, asking God to grant us what we could not give ourselves. In that Olympic stadium, the praying crowd impressed me.

A few months later, the American president met with the North Korean leader on the demilitarized zone that separates the two Koreas. This unprecedented event opened a breach into the future. Spontaneously I made the connection with the humble and trusting prayer of the crowd in the Seoul stadium. A prayer that made its modest contribution to the construction of peace. I expressed my gratitude to Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to the founder Dr. Hak Ja Han-Moon who made the 2017 Seoul meeting possible and prepares for a Summit to be held in February 2022. A Summit that will bring together religious leaders from around the world to support the reunification efforts. Thank you, Dr. Hak Ja Han-Moon, for tirelessly carrying the concern for peace and reconciliation so that Korea can regain its unity.

Have you noticed this contagion of walls throughout the world? Walls that separate people and prevent them from moving around. Walls of shame. Walls between Israelis and Palestinians, between Americans and Mexicans, between Poles and Belarusians, between Morocco and Spanish enclaves...

When the Berlin Wall was destroyed in 1989, I never imagined that Europe would one day become a fortress!

Aren't walls made to be destroyed?

Between the two Koreas, the wall is still standing: a wall of barbed wire, watchtowers, and bunkers. It is a wound that is still raw and expresses the national drama.

In his August 2014 trip to Seoul, Pope Francis beatified 124 Korean martyrs including Paul Yun Ji-Chung (beheaded at age 32) and his companions. The pope not only recognizes the historical role of the Catholic Church in Korea, but he highlights this unusual fact found nowhere else: The Christian faith did not come to the shores of Korea through missionaries, it came through the reception of the Word of God by lay people.

The Pope told the bishops:

"You are the heirs of an impressive tradition that began, and has largely grown, thanks to the fidelity, perseverance and work of generations of lay people. They did not have the tradition of clericalism: they were lay people, they went forward alone. It is significant that the history of the Church in Korea began with a direct encounter with the Word of God.

The first French missionaries arrived in 1836. They lived in difficult and dangerous conditions before being executed for their faith.

On the plane back from Korea, Pope Francis answered questions from the press.



A Korean journalist asked him:

"Pyongyang claims that Christianity is a direct threat to its regime and leadership. We know that something terrible has happened to North Korean Christians. But we don't know what happened. Is there a particular wish in your mind to try to change Pyongyang's approach to North Korean Christians?"

The Pope responded:

"Today in the cathedral there was a gift offered to me, it was a crown of thorns of Christ, made with wire that divides the two parts of the one Korea. I took this gift on the plane...it is the suffering of division, of a divided family.

We have a hope: the two Koreas are brothers, these two Koreas speak the same language. When we speak the same language, it is because we have the same mother and this gives us hope.

The suffering of the division is great, I understand that, and I pray that it will end."

Let us pray in turn:

God, Almighty, our Creator,

You who love the human family and care for our land,

Thank you for giving us Abraham as our common father in faith. He is a blessing to all peoples

With the sons and daughters of Abraham, with other believers and all people of good will, we beseech you:

Tear down the walls that separate, remove the obstacles that prevent progress.

See your people of Korea who know the pain of division and the trial of separation.

You who are the God of life and not of death, pour out your life-giving breath upon us so that your people may have the courage of the future.

You who are the God of peace and not of war, grant us to live in harmony and peace, aware that in your eyes we are all brothers and sisters.

Stay with us as we walk, so that we may keep hope in our hearts.

Amen

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