

## Peace Road 2020: Meet FFWPU USA's National Peace Road Team

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This week, the [Peace Road 2020: Reconciling All People](#) national tour begins! Traveling by van from Maine to Alaska, a diverse team of eight Unificationists is embarking on a [four-week journey across America](#), including 26 states and 30 cities. Several Unificationist communities are also joining Peace Road with regional tours.

We talked to a few members of the national team, who shared about their inspiration for the cross-country trek bringing prayers for healing and reconciliation to many of America's most historical sites.



*Joshua Holmes, California*

My previous experience with Peace Road was always as a biking or walking participant, but this year I am humbled to be the team leader of the national tour. The stark difference I feel with this year is that we are focusing on the hearts of individuals and the pain of the past, and honoring that past. In [Mother Moon's memoir](#) she talks about the importance of building memorials and releasing bitter anguish. We are visiting deep historical places in American history but also locations of a lot of pain. We are going to these locations of pain and honoring those feelings, releasing the anger that is there to bring healing and reconciliation. There are a lot of tributary stops that aren't part of the national tour, but they also hold great importance, like an African memorial site in New York City where we are honoring the enslaved people who were buried there. 2020 has been a time of great unrest and I believe the world is looking for truth; something to bring them reconciliation and liberation in their hearts. I believe Peace Road is very necessary right now and our team is bringing this renewed energy to all of these national locations and

documenting this journey. I love the diversity of our team and it's very powerful and inspiring to be working with them. The real effort, though, is what is being done in local communities around the country, and we are documenting the power of what is happening locally. Key leaders are being invited to speak on healing, remembering, and reconciliation, because in a holy community there is absolutely no room for discrimination. I'm excited about the lives being impacted and transformed through Peace Road, and the hearts being healed.



*Stephanie Dias, New York*

When I hear "reconciling all people" it sounds really simple, but unfortunately there is still anger and hate in society. That's why I believe Peace Road is such an awesome opportunity to show the world that we can all be one family if we have love for each other. When there is love in the picture then anything is possible. I have a Hispanic background and our team members are all very diverse. We are an example that people of different backgrounds can come together, love each other, and unite with one another. I have done Peace Road before, in 2018 at Central Park in New York City, where I was one of the coordinators. I believe this is an important movement because there is pain in America and we have to bring healing. I believe the only way to achieve reconciliation among people is to heal them. These places that we are going to on the Peace Road tour have a lot of significance within America's history and it's important to recognize that. We are working toward healing by offering our prayers on this tour and bringing together politicians, clergy, and people of all backgrounds. We can't be ignorant anymore; this is the time for everyone to educate themselves and it's everyone's responsibility to heal the pain of this country. The amount of detail and research that has been put into this tour is incredible and I'm very grateful for that. There are a few places that I am really anticipating, including Plymouth Rock in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where the pilgrims first landed. That was such a crucial moment where people came here to freely love God. There is also a tributary event in Manhattan, which isn't one of the national stops, but local leaders are gathering at downtown city hall at an African burial site that has several

hundred graves. It's significant to have prayers there and bring healing energy. I know I will also get really emotional at the Underground Railroad because it's where enslaved people sacrificed everything and risked their lives for their freedom. All of the historical sites on the tour were a turning point for America and so many lives, and I want to honor that and bring peace to these places.



*Yoshie Manaka, New Jersey*

I have done a few Peace Road events since it began in 2015. I participated in its founding in South Korea, and at the kick-off bike tour at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. This is the first time it's a van tour though, and I think this opens up a lot of new opportunities on a bigger scale. It's an exciting way to spotlight local on-the-ground efforts as we work to bring reconciliation in our own homes and communities. We will still be six feet apart, but at least we can have human interaction and conversations. We have a great team and a good mix of people who really feel inspired to do this tour. It's a chance for us to explore the history of America, which has pain and sorrow, but that is why I feel Peace Road is so important and why we are documenting our trip as we go. It's going to be educational, eye-opening, and heart-opening. I will be digging into parts of myself and my heritage, looking at, as a young American, what kind of foundation do I stand on and then take responsibility for that and honor it. I think this experience will really speak to what I can do for America in the future, but I'm more excited to listen and learn. When you have the heart to meet another person and be invested in their story no matter what your differences are, to hear what they are saying and respond that "your pain is my pain," that kind of transformation on a personal level is very powerful. I truly believe peace and reconciliation does start with me and every one of us. Each stop on Peace Road is very meaningful, but the Trail of Tears and stops that have to do with black America will be especially impactful to me considering what is happening in our country right now. It suddenly feels like there is a mirror in front of all of us and we are seeing the things we need to work on. We really have to offer one another support and love, and "hug" America. That is what I am hoping we can achieve on this tour.



*S. Iwasaki, Pennsylvania*

It was so easy for me to say yes to joining the Peace Road national tour; I was so humbled to be asked. I feel this inspiring energy and momentum where Unificationist leaders have been so active; it really coincides with what I want to see in my life and my community. I participated in Peace Road in 2016 through [Generation Peace Academy](#) (GPA) and we did a bike tour in Washington, D.C. This year, the theme is "reconciling all people," which personally speaks to me and my personal beliefs. [Mother Moon](#) has really asked America to step up, and now more than ever we really need unity, prayer, and healing. On that foundation, America can help the world. I told God that I'm here to help and I believe Peace Road is a great way for me to start my next chapter and journey, both physically and spiritually. I imagine being most impacted by the historical pain in the south and coastal areas of the tour. Peace and healing is very much needed and I think God can really work with all of us coming together to offer our prayers at these historical places. We have a diverse team that I believe is key. It really speaks to the reason why we are doing Peace Road and also to the power of Unificationist teachings, bringing together people of different backgrounds in unity and harmony. This is a catalyst for restoration and reconciliation of our own ancestors as well as America's past. I'm really looking forward to this tour and the whole team dynamic. We really love America and want to offer this healing to the country. Ending the tour in Alaska gives me a feeling of peace; it is brimming with hope for me and it signifies offering up our efforts to God.



*R. Arthur, New York*

As a Unificationist, I have always been pretty passionate about unifying the world. I participated in my first Peace Road bike tour in 2018 and really enjoyed it. This year's theme of reconciliation really inspired me, especially with protests happening all over the world. To me, the protests are an opportunity for all of us to open up our eyes to what is happening in society and begin a new era. Peace, to me, is when we can all treat each other like real brothers and sisters and as one family under God; then there is nothing we can't solve. Through Peace Road, we are visiting these very important historical sites and offering our prayers in solidarity with other people. I think this is crucial given America's painful past. I'm from Ghana and grew up there for 14 years. We learned about slavery in depth throughout my education there, so it is a very emotional topic for a lot of people. On the Peace Road tour we are stopping at Point Comfort, Virginia, where the slavery era began. This hits close to home for me because many Ghanians were shipped to America. Virginia is one of many places that we are visiting, and I think that this journey is an opportunity for education and understanding about our brothers and sisters and their history, as well as how we can all work together to bring unity and peace. We all have our origins, but I don't think that should define us. The Peace Road team is of different backgrounds and I think that speaks to our amazing, diverse Unificationist community and our teachings. My mom is Japanese and specifically wanted to have an African partner to become a bridge to bring together both races. I think it is these kinds of ideas, where people of different backgrounds come together and love one another, that will ultimately reconcile all people and bring peace. It all starts with healing and changing ourselves.

*Reconciling all people*

# PEACE ROAD 2020

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Our beautiful and deeply challenging history must be faced and dealt with.

Guided by a heart of reconciliation, Peace Road 2020 will visit sites of great historical accomplishment, as well as suffering and injustice, throughout America this summer.

Peace Road 2020 was created by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, affectionately known as the Mother of Peace, to foster dialogue, unity and prayerful encouragement of the best within ourselves.



## About

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Ready to take the next step? You can become a contributor to our cause, or participate yourself.

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