

## FFWPU USA: Celebration of Peace Awards Banquet 2023 held in New Jersey

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On December 30, a special gathering entitled "The Celebration of Peace Awards Banquet-2023" was held at the Hilton Hasbrouck Heights in New Jersey. 88 people attended. The celebration commemorated the "Peace Starts With Me Rally" held at the Prudential Center in December 2019, where thousands of clergy and members of many faith communities gathered together. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the Mother of Peace, gave a stirring message of peace at this event. The celebration will become an annual end-of-year event, bringing all outreach organizations together to appreciate their accomplishments in the past year, share our vision for World Peace and Unification, honor all our contacts and leaders, and to actively continue our membership drive.

The celebrations included an Interfaith Water Ceremony, a delicious meal, a 2023 outreach photo montage, a song offering, and information tables for each organization. Attendees donated a suggested \$120 each. The event was organized by Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, Pastor, New Jersey Family Church; Rev. Barry Geller, Executive Director, UPF-USA, New Jersey; Rev. Bruce Grodner, Secretary General, WCLC; Dr. Greg Agulan, Regional Director, ACLC, New Jersey; Rev. Emiljun Rapada, Pastor, Elizabeth Family Church; and Mrs. Katarina Connery, Vice President, WFWP-USA.

Dr. Jenkins shared the message "Peace Begins With Me and Thee," reminding everyone to share the True Parents' vision for world peace on the individual and world levels. A tear-filled Bridge Ceremony made up the main event, which was followed by honoring all the 2023 participants in their various affiliated organization activities this past year. Four outstanding leaders, one from each organization, were recognized with the presentation of an award. True Parents' efforts for world peace are uniquely expressed in each of these affiliated organizations. The event ended with the Unity Song "Let There Be Peace on Earth."