

## UPF Las Vegas Commemorates Interfaith Harmony

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February 17, 2016



Las Vegas, NV – On February 17, 2016 at Las Vegas City Hall UPF Las Vegas commemorated the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week during its February Monthly Peace Forum.

The activity included representatives from several religious groups including Sikh, Muslim, and Christian who spoke about the root causes of conflict and barriers to interfaith cooperation, and possible solutions to overcoming these barriers.

One panelist felt that the wearing of traditional garb was a barrier to interfaith harmony and suggested that we have an event where everyone dressed the same; however, it was felt that we would all have to “come naked” for this to happen, as stated by Jerushia McDonald Hylton! The main focus of the discussion was about finding solutions to overcome the barriers to interfaith cooperation. The importance of encouraging our youth to become the next generation of leaders centered on God and ways to bring better understanding and appreciation of others were discussed. The importance of parents as role models for their children was stressed. Group picnics, group sports, theatre and the arts are some of the programs that could be implemented to give the entire family opportunities to engage with other cultures and develop a feeling of ‘One family Under God’.

Another area that the panelists focused on was the role of the interfaith community in the refugees’ crisis and homelessness. Sikhs have a tradition of feeding whoever is hungry and we learned that the State of Utah has learned how to deal effectively with its homeless community.

Su Phelps, publisher of Veterans Reporter news was appointed as an Ambassador for Peace. Noted panelists included Dr. Aslam Abdullah, Mr. Teji Malik, Mr. James Rigney and Rev. Jerushia McDonald Hylton. Sixteen people attended the monthly peace forum at Las Vegas City Hall in anticipation of the establishment of the Las Vegas Peace Council in September 2016. Of note, three people from the Las Vegas Police Department were present from their efforts to help - “Rebuilding Every City Around Peace”.

Afterwards, an opportunity was given to attend the City Council Meeting. While having a light lunch, participants enthusiastically shared with one another, with excitement over some of the ideas that were discussed, and what the next steps will be.

On March 26, Universal Peace federation will partner with Women’s Federation for World Peace and the Moulin Rouge Project to have an afternoon of Healing and Reconciliation, recognizing the Moulin Rouge agreement which, 54 years ago, provided for people of all races to be admitted into the Las Vegas Casinos.

Contributed by: Leslie Rigney, UPF Nevada Executive Director