

UPF Carinthia, Austria: Slovenians and Austrians meet at a peace festival

Alfred Waldmann

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Bad Eisenkappel, Austria -- Around 30 people from both sides of the border with Slovenia met at a peace festival in Carinthia, Austria's southernmost state.



Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, held the gathering on July 26, 2020, in the town of Bad Eisenkappel -- Železna Kapla-Bela in the Slovenian language.

This town and the whole region of southern Carinthia were severely affected in the last century by ethnic and political conflicts during and after the two World Wars.

Both the Slavic and German cultures have existed in this region for centuries, and mutual respect has always been a guarantor of peace and prosperity.

Each year the Carinthian chapter of FFWPU organizes a peace event in this region. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's event took place at the home of Hermann Grubelnik, a FFWPU member.

The event had been planned and prepared by few people but with lots of zeal and enthusiasm. Several online conferences met beforehand to ensure a smooth flow of this celebration.

The main theme of the celebration was the centenary of UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon's birth, plus the 60th anniversary of his marriage with Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the "Mother of Peace,"



The first part of the event included various cultural contributions, coordinated by Gottfried Ibounig; readings in both German and Slovenian from Reverend Moon's autobiography and the Bible; and testimonies by Erna Košmrlj and Ferdinand Blaschke.

In a sermon, Alfred Waldmann, the chair of FFWPU-Carinthia, referred to the Bible's Book of Habakkuk, in which the prophet Habakkuk laments in front of God over unrighteousness and violence in the world. The prophet then receives an immediate answer from God: "[F]or I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told" (Habakkuk 1:5). Mr. Waldmann called upon the assembled community to take action, with each one starting with oneself.

Subsequently a hearty meal was served by the head of the house. The afternoon continued with songs in different languages and lively conversations.