

American Clergy Leadership Conference's 7-day Chosen DP workshop concludes

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Many clergy guests felt inspired and enlightened while reflecting on powerful moments they experienced throughout a 7-day 'Chosen' workshop hosted by the American Clergy Leadership Conference (AACC) from February 19 to 25. More than 40 faith leaders came together at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) in Las Vegas to study and gain a deeper understanding of the Divine Principle, the teachings of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his wife Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founders of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) and affectionately known as True Parents.



"There is no greater offering that America can make than uniting Christian leadership," said FFWPU-USA President Rev. Demian Dunkley. For more than two decades, AACC has created interfaith programs that bring together people of all backgrounds, including Unificationists and Christians. The workshop, 'Chosen: Returning the Christian Foundation to God,' aimed to educate Christian pastors on the interwoven elements of the Bible and the Divine Principle. "Salvation is not just spiritual, it's also physical," said AACC National Co-Chairman and Chosen Co-Director Dr. Luonne Rouse. "America is chosen by God to be the nation that is the hope for the rest of the world, and the Christian faith is chosen to make this happen. True Parents have provided a way to bring the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth."

Clergy guests received an in-depth, side-by-side analysis of the Bible and the Divine Principle through

daily presentations by several Unificationist and Christian leaders. The sessions -- 16 in total -- included a mix of Biblical passages, historical timelines, quotes from True Parents, and more. Presentations were given by Dr. Rouse; Rev. Dunkley; ACLC National Co-Presidents Rev. Mark Abernathy and Archbishop Sulance Lewis-Rose; ACLC National Co-Chairman Emeriti Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, Jr. and Dr. Michael Jenkins; Minister Reiko Jenkins; Bishop Jesse Edwards and Dr. Tanya Edwards; Bishop Michael Sykes and Minister Zena Sykes; and FFWPU-USA Subregional Directors Rev. David Rendel and Rev. John Jackson.



The workshop content resonated with many participants, including Marianne Irwin, a native of Germany and longtime missionary in Nicaragua. Irwin joined ACLC years ago and participated in the workshop as a Spanish interpreter for an Ecuadorian priest. "This was an amazing experience for me," said Irwin. "I decided to attend because I feel that all of God's children should pay attention to this time we're living in."



Dr. Moon, also known as True Mother and the Mother of Peace, understands that the time is ripe to unite the Body of Christ as well as all of humankind. She has called the world's clergy to uphold the mission of righteous people, inaugurating the World Clergy Leadership Conference (WCLC) in December 2019, and

has stated that true families are essential in realizing God's Will and the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. "Without God's love as an absolute center, such a family will ultimately break down, and a nation of such families will also decline," said Dr. Moon in a recent speech.

The Chosen workshop further explained topics like God's Original Ideal; Human Responsibility in Building God's Kingdom; What Went Wrong; Principles of Restoration; God's Work of Salvation; The Blessing; and The New Chosen People, among others. "This workshop is a microcosm of God's Kingdom manifesting itself in a real way," said FFWPU-USA Director of Education and Chosen Co-Director Rev. Mari Curry. "This is about inheritance and transforming our culture through education, through the Marriage Blessing, and through creating stronger families. America is in crisis, so we are asking pastors to lead their congregations to the next level, bringing collaboration and unity to make the changes God wants to see."



Participants could feel a magnanimous spirit among one another throughout the program. "One thing that I loved about this workshop, which blew my mind, was that I saw pastors sharing the Divine Principle with such heart," said Rev. Jackson. "I feel so much hope." Clergy guests shared their insights and reflections during fellowship, topic discussions, activities, and shared meals, building greater rapport with one another while deepening their grasp of holy scripture. "It's been an enlightening workshop for me," said Bishop Dr. Ron Thomas of Reconciliation Apostolic Ministries in Las Vegas. "We've learned about indemnity, and that's one of the things we don't talk much about in Christian faith."

"God has predestined and preordained this time," added ACLC Oklahoma Co-Chairwoman Rev. Dr. Marilyn Kotulek. "The Lord anointed True Father to bring peace and global reconciliation and to unite the Body of Christ. Now, True Mother is taking the sword of the spirit and the Word of God and she is leading this awesome cavalry."

Leaders of the recently established Young Clergy Leadership Conference (YCLC), a branch of ACLC, also attended the workshop. "It's been an amazing journey so far," said Jermaine Bishop, YCLC education and resource manager and assistant pastor of the Los Angeles Family Church. "YCLC wants to anoint and appoint young leaders to take up the baton that ACLC is passing on." Unificationist professors also weighed in on the emotional experience. "The Bible passages in the presentations made me cry because I think the promises made for Christians by God are now bearing fruit," said Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) professor Dr. Theodore Shimmyo.

As the workshop concluded, participants received special certificates and were invited to join Famicon 2020 to continue learning more about Unificationist teachings. Workshop organizers said they will further enhance the program for next time. "The world needs anointed men and women, and God's hope is that they will really build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth," said Dr. Rouse. "This workshop gives everyone the tools to do that."

ACLC will host the next Chosen workshop in March and April at IPEC.