

WFWP DC Celebrate Women's Day at the Washington Times building

Angelika Selle
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In a beautiful room set up in the Washington Times building, a diverse group of powerful women and men gathered on March 25, 2017, to celebrate Women's Day and the unique role and responsibility that women have to play in the world today. We gathered together in a beautiful atmosphere created by Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and together explored the vision of peace that women are uniquely prepared to bring to the table.

The event focused around a panel of four women, each of different cultural backgrounds, who shared from their hearts the wisdom of their faith traditions. We heard from Dottie Chicquelo, representing America's First People, Bishop Petra Kidwell, representing the Christian faith, Rhonda Williams, representing the Jewish faith, and Zulfia Qahar, representing the Muslim faith. Each of these powerful, beautiful women gave unique perspective and insight into the "response-ability" that women are called to lead with and the influence that women have on the men, families, and communities in their lives.



From Dottie Chicquelo we heard of the Native Cherokee woman, who sees herself as a servant to Mother Earth and Father Sky. She is equal to men and has significant power and autonomy, and she counsels and teaches spiritual practices. Dottie spoke of the barriers affecting Native Cherokee women and the grassroots movement needed to band together to face such issues as starvation, the Pipeline on Standing Rock, lack of self-actualization, and the preservation of spiritual beliefs.

Bishop Petra Kidwell spoke passionately about the empowerment of women, who are called to become everything that creation wants them to be. Women are to be the CEOs, entrepreneurs, speakers, coaches, and the protectors of the family, fighting for equality. We have a role to play in the universe. Kidwell expressed that the problems we think hinder us are actually our strengths.



Rhonda Williams shared beautiful and powerful words on the role of women, who are uniquely created in the image of God as women. She shared that in the Jewish tradition, women are responsible for giving education of the heart, and that the highest law is to preserve life. In response to the lies that society is bombarded with, Rhonda proclaimed that we are masters of our fate. We have the power to forgive, to lighten the burden, to pave the way smoother for our descendants, and to repair the world.

Zulfia Qahar shared a beautiful perspective of the roles that women play as sisters, wives, and mothers. She shared that in the Koran, God created man and woman as equals, and that our differences are given to us so that we learn from and respect each other. The men in our lives learn from us. Zulfia shared from her experience that all religions believe the same fundamentals and that it is our responsibility to educate each other and pass on the message that we can get along, that we can bring peace to the world.



Our audience asked the panel a powerful question: what can women do to bridge the gap between different cultures? The answer given was simple: different cultures first need to know each other. It

requires getting out of one's comfort zone, having an experience with a different culture in mind, and developing a relationship with someone from that culture. We need to feel like one family.

Our event culminated with a powerful message from WFWP USA's president, Angelika Selle, who called for the ignition of a culture of heart. Angelika mentioned three parts of the WFWP vision in this context today: to empower women to establish a culture of heart, to educate women about a lifestyle embodying the logic of love, and to follow the lead of WFWP's founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, by taking action to bring change to this world. This feminine type of leadership reflects a unique aspect of God's heart and differs from the leadership of men. It reflects the heart of a nurturing mother: we are not here to compete; we are here to complete. It is time for women to take responsibility for how we are influencing the men in our lives, which first begins with understanding our own precious value. Enlightened women are women who practice what they preach, who lead through example, and whose loving leadership inspires change in others.



Before finishing the event, we had the pleasure of participating in an informal Bridge of Peace ceremony. Each of the participants were paired with a sister or brother of another background and given the opportunity to connect on a deeper level, recognize the pain of the past, and offer loving energy to each other.

It is time for inspiration, vision, change, and growth. The intercultural dialogue here today absolutely sparked a light in the flame of healing and leadership for women, families, and cultures worldwide being tended by WFWP. Thank you so much to the WFWP chapters in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia for organizing this event.