

WFWP Colorado Hosted Their First Interreligious Sharing Gathering Via Zoom

Gale and Antonio Alves

April 21, 2020



On April 21st, 2020, Antonio and Gale Alves hosted their first Interreligious Sharing gathering via Zoom. Six spiritual leaders attended from the following faith-based organizations: Baha' i, The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, the Heart of Junction Christian church and Family Federation for World Peace. The leaders of the Two Rivers Mosque and the Dharma Mountain Zen Center could not join and instead sent in their contributions, which were read aloud during the meeting.

Each speaker had 10 minutes to speak on the topic: "What is the Purpose of Life?" We had discussed this question before in a previous gathering, but this was a new set of religious leaders. Brilliana Barnes and Joan Brighton represented the Baha'i Faith, a religion that teaches the essential worth of all religions and promotes unity. Also participating were Rev. Darrin Crow, the senior pastor of the Heart of Junction church, and Steve and Venett Gunderson, elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.

After each presentation, participants shared their thoughts, comments and insights. All of the participants were invested in the topic and shared enthusiastically. We realized we all have a lot in common: Our physical life is to prepare ourselves for the spiritual, eternal life; our lives should glorify God; we should sacrifice ourselves for others; if we fulfill the purpose that God ordained for our lives, that will bring us joy and joy to God as well; family is important; we grow through our suffering and we meet God.

Gale and Antonio conveyed the spiritual underpinnings of WFWP and FFWP (Family Federation for World Peace) and its contributions to peace: "[Our founders] Rev. Moon and Dr. Hak Jan Han Moon teach that within all areas of life, people need to learn how to harmonize with each other centered on God, centered on goodness. The more we can live in harmony with one another, the more we will reflect True Peace on earth and the happier we will all be. This, we believe, is what God, our Heavenly Parent, wants too."

"We believe in the motherly heart of selflessness, compassion and desire for mutual prosperity are crucial for creating genuine, sustainable peace under God," explained Gale, referring to WFWP.

In addition to the religious representatives, FFWP and WFWP partnered with sister organization Universal Peace Federation (UPF) for this online educational gathering. Peggy Yuginri, the UPF Colorado executive director, did an excellent job explaining UPF's Principles of Peace:

1. We are one human family centered on God.
2. The highest qualities of the human being are spiritual and moral.
3. The family is the school of love and peace.
4. We are created to live for the sake of others.
5. Peace entails cooperation beyond boundaries of ethnicity, religion and nationality.

We are also grateful to UPF member Miri Kamar, who offered valuable support for our event. She assisted us by uploading written material to everyone's screen and reading the content on behalf of our guests who could not attend, and she participated in the discussions.

At the conclusion of the session, everyone expressed that they looked forward to our next Interreligious Sharing in May. The Christian church pastor offered his church as our next meeting place, if the ban is lifted and enables us to do that safely. Otherwise, we will meet via Zoom. He suggested "What is Evil and Where Did It Come From?" as our next topic.

All the guests conveyed sincere gratitude for this interfaith opportunity. We, in turn, applauded all of them. In our walk of faith, we greatly value this type of interaction and focus praying for and serving people of other races, cultures, religions and people in need.

Editor's note: Two years ago, in April 2018, WFWP Colorado representative Gale Alves launched the Interreligious Sharing Series in Denver, Colorado, together with her husband Antonio (see [article](#)). Passionate about Father and Mother Moon's vision for a peaceful world that brings various faith traditions together in harmony, the Alves couple successfully continued the series after they moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, and even the global pandemic hasn't stopped them. The interreligious program is continuing online!