

Reports from the Monthly National Ministry Meeting

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Miilhan Stephens, Vice President of FFWPU USA, acted as emcee. With an opening prayer by Justin Okamoto, Assistant Pastor of the Westrock Family Church, congregational songs and Hoon Dok Hae (scripture reading) by Dr. Michael Balcomb, FFWPU USA President, of True Father's message titled, "The Birth of the Father and His Mission," the group connected to the deeper purpose of their work as they began this meeting.

They first took a look at recent happenings and Unificationist initiatives around the world by watching the latest iPeace TV Weekly Update. It was a refreshing gathering, and exciting new ideas were presented. There was a shared sense of renewal as everyone committed to extending their reach this year and making a true impact through their projects, events and efforts.

After the reports were given, the group watched a brief video about True Mother's 1998 tour in America. This preceded a message by Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, FFWPU North America Continental Chair, who spoke about True Mother's determination, courage, and latest priorities.

Below is a brief summary of the reports shared during the national ministry meeting.



The Unification Theological Seminary

Hugh Spurgin, President of the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, New York, gave a brief update about the programs at UTS. This year marks the 40th anniversary of UTS, and there will be a graduation celebration this May, which will include four honorary doctorates. Dr. Spurgin urged participants of the meeting to pray for the seminary, the historical heart of our movement, as it undergoes the process of seeking accreditation.



The North and South American Sustainable Development for World Peace

Mrs. Yasuko Takahashi shared about the Leda Project, a sustainably developed community and ideal society in Paraguay envisioned by True Father. Located in a region that makes up 60% of the land in Paraguay, yet only two percent of the population, Leda is referred to as the Blessed Land of Canaan. True Father established the Association for the Development of the Blessed Land of Canaan in the North and South Americas in 1999. He described Leda as God's nation, where inhabitants would conserve the environment and discover solutions to the global food shortage. Today, the Leda Project is open for volunteers and participants.



The American Clergy Leadership Conference

Tom Cutts, National Executive Director of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), gave a report of recent and ongoing events designed to promote family values. Among these are prayer breakfasts, pastors' forums with Divine Principle education, Women in Ministry family value education events, and "A Vision for America" education on the Holy Marriage Blessing. ACLC member and Christian pastor, Rev. Jesse Edwards, participates in A Vision for America, and it has proven to be very helpful to have a Christian pastor explaining the Divine Principle to other Christian ministers.

ACLC also aims to bring many couples to the Holy Marriage Blessing; there will be national Marriage Blessing celebration on June 27, 2015. Tom Cutts also shared some of the research that backs the value of the Marriage Blessing, including families with more socialized sons, a higher sense of value in daughters, and more respect toward parents.



The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles

The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) USA President and Vice President, Naokimi Ushiroda and Teresa Ferette, respectively, shared a redefined purpose for CARP that goes back to the roots and core of sharing and teaching the Divine Principle. This shift in direction comes with a new mission statement: to empower students to pursue their God-given potential through the study and application of the Divine Principle.

CARP has the potential to become a global network of principled student leaders, as envisioned by True Parents since CARP first began. True Father's vision for CARP was to raise the next generation of leaders, and even today True Mother emphasizes the power of the Word in educating young people.

The first course of action for CARP USA is to host a seven-day Divine Principle workshop, which will take place on the East and West coasts of the United States, including an event at the International Peace Education Center when it opens in May, 2015.

Finally, Teresa Ferrete shared a creative video made by the CARP chapter at Ohio State University, which highlighted that one's impact (in tribal messiahship) is infinite.



Women’s Federation for World Peace USA

Katarina Connery, Vice President of the Women’s Federation for World Peace (WFWP) USA, gave a report on the recent events of WFWP around the nation. Last month was Women’s History Month, giving opportunity for a flurry of events and seminars including the Her Story Award presentation in Pennsylvania, “The Role of Women as Peace Makers” in Las Vegas, co-sponsoring an event at the United Nations, “Creating Peace through Relationships” in Virginia, and “Women as Peacemakers” in Maryland. The annual WFWP National Assembly will be held this October, 2015 at the International Peace Education Center.

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The Universal Peace Federation USA

Ricardo de Sena, Secretary General of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) North America, reiterated a recent message by Dr. Ki Hoon Kim in which he outlined three ways to be successful: connecting with God’s Word, practicing dedication, and performing good deeds. With this inspiration and preparation, members of UPF USA have been able to cooperate with the United Nations interfaith agency, Alliance of

Civilizations, as well as other successful endeavors.

UPF USA also recently participated in the International Leadership Conference in Korea. Several of their recent contacts, including Hon. Champagne and Catherine Duncan, were former mayors or ran for mayor. This brought a new focus to UPF on how to connect with mayors to spread their ideas, events and projects to the larger community. Finally, Mr. de Sena announced the launch of the Asian Affairs office of UPF USA.



District 1

Tom McDevitt, Chairman of the *Washington Times*, talked about tribal messiahship activities in the Washington, D.C. area. He defined a “tribe” as the people who encircle us in our social sphere, and anyone can be in that tribe. He emphasized that it is the central responsibility of Unificationist families to teach and share the Divine Principle with their tribe. Unificationists in DC, Maryland and Virginia took the initiative to form the Vanguard Group, where they hold regular meetings educating and organizing around the theme of tribal messiahship.

Mr. McDevitt shared the interesting perspective that, in fact, the “tribe” is a common concept, such as in marketing or social media. “It’s normal to connect with people,” he said. “We all do it.” He described unique and creative events that his local community used to teach the Divine Principle to their relatives and friends. One such gathering held a panel of a mother, a son, a brother and a married couple, each of whom gave testimonies to exemplify one of the Four Realms of Heart.



District 2

Andrew Compton, District 2 Pastor Representative in New York, and Justin Okamoto welcomed meeting guests from near and far to the New York district. They shared about recent events, including a successful dance fundraiser for youth. They also invited everyone to the upcoming outreach initiative in New York from May 3-23, 2015. True Mother will be arriving in New York on May 23, and local Unificationists are excited to welcome her to the state after a successful outreach endeavor.

“One of the biggest challenges to outreach activities is getting young people involved,” explained Rev. Andrew Compton. He said that to remedy this, the outreach team will include a dance and social events factor. There will be cultural programs every night, great occasions to which the outreach team can invite their friends.

Justin Okamoto shared about the young adult projects in New York. First, he reported on the CARP chapter in Westrock, which has grown by 25% this semester. The chapter provides an opportunity for college students to learn leadership skills. This summer, they will hold a benefit concert for people affected by human trafficking. Second, Justin shared about the monthly LIGHT service in Manhattan, where young adults create a lively and inspiring Sunday service.



District 3

Manoj Jacob, Pastor of the Clifton Family Church in New Jersey, shared about programs and goals of Unificationists in the New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania regions. Among these endeavors, recent and ongoing, are outreach programs, small groups, Holy Day celebrations, Sunday services (attended by over 500 people weekly), a growing young adult ministry, a community care system and monthly workshops.