

Minutes of FFWPU USA's National Council Meeting in April 2017

Alan Jessen and Mari Curry
April 2, 2017



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings to you from the 2017 National Council. We have just completed our annual kick-off meeting March 31- April 2 in New York at the Family Federation headquarters and we are eager to share with you our progress and plans for the upcoming year. The Council has 12 members representing each district and whom are elected on a rotating basis every 2 years. This year we welcomed 4 new members to the council. *(list them here) if you feel inspired to become a part of the National Council in the future representing your District, please make that known to your District Representative and District Council Chair.

This year we are changing things up in a significant way. In our first morning session, we reflected on the past four years. Since the National Council has been instated we have accomplished many things. We wrote the Charter documents to outline a governance structure for Local and District Councils and for the National Council to exist as an advisory body to our National President and Continental Director; drafted a Whistleblower Policy; conducted a National Survey on issues of communication, tithing, utilization of church website resources and outreach; created a grant program; and submitted recommendations to HQ on issues of importance to brothers and sisters across the nation.

What we realize is that now is the time to shift our focus to align more directly with True Mother's directions for reaching the vision 2020 goals and to work more closely with the department teams at headquarters. To accomplish this objective, we are very excited to announce that we are creating four new Recommendations Committees: Witnessing and Tribal Messiahship; Youth; Blessed Family and Member Care; and Communications. Each will have a direct liaison contact with a department leader at headquarters. These National Council Committees will then be better able to communicate headquarters programs and plans to the field as well as bring better feedback from the field to leadership at HQ. This has always been the mission of the National Council – to build better communication and strengthen trust between our membership and our National Headquarters team. Measurable progress has been made but we are confident that these changes will greatly enhance this work. We are also working on an exciting “revision” of the grants program and urge you to stay tuned for this announcement in the near future.

Thank you for “keeping the faith” in the vision of our True Parents. Let us now not only keep faith but grow our hearts to move forward together as the Elder Son Nation.

May God Bless you and your family,

Alan Jessen
National Council Chair

Mari Curry, VP FFWPU
National Council President



April 1, 2017

**NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
April 1-2, 2017**

Present: Noah Ross, Amelia Schnorr, Eugene Harnett, Bruce Sutchar, Teresa Yamane, Michael Allen, Curtis Martin, Atsushi Takino, Gary Abrahams, Sarah Oben, and Mari Curry, Alan Jessen joined via zoom on April 2nd, Dr Balcomb joined two sessions.

Meeting started at 8.03am. Dr. Balcomb joined the meeting

Teresa: New Council members: LA – Curtis Martin, Eugene Harnett (Anchorage), Gary Abrahams, and Sarah Oben (Maryland). New Chair – Alan Jessen.

President's Report

Dr. Balcomb: *shares his morning HDK about how Father survived torture in Seodaemun prison (1955). Visited Seodaemun prison, now it's a museum.*

Mari: It's the first National Council meeting of the year. We asked Dr Balcomb to come share the vision of FFWPU and True Mother's priorities.

Dr. Balcomb: Did you all receive the Year in Review in your mail?

Showing the President's Report to the NC (ppt)

Brief overview of the state of the movement. Highlights of what is going well. You wanted to hear how we are dealing with goals and results. Current priorities in 2017, and also issues that I would love to have your involvement.

Since we last met there are some significant developments, most importantly – True Mother's visit to the US Kennedy Caucus Room which was the main goal. In the past, True Mother would follow the text prepared for her, usually by Father. Mother doesn't do that anymore. She feels a close connection to God. The last 3 years, you could almost see the spirit of God showing up. Mother is also a very observant woman, TPs spoke in about 600 locations in the US, so she knows how audience responds to written speeches. She also has some eye problems. Mother did 3 things: she was absolutely straight, she explained God's providence to the crowd in 5 minutes: Fall, Restoration and her identity as TP. But the main point is that you are called by God. You might not like it or think about it, because you are elected officials, and this is the time to make the change. God needs you. I think every person felt some kind of calling.

Then True Mother spoke at Manhattan Center. She spoke after Father's ascension, and that speech was very strong. In this speech True Mother said, "I want you to feel responsible for your state". Current Priorities for True Mother: – 1) making a social impact, 2) witnessing, 3) cultivating young talent.

Dr. Balcomb and the NC members had an exchange of Q & A , centering mainly on Blessing Standards and implementing the priorities True Mother set toward Vision 2020.

Teresa: Noah Ross is going to cover history of NC



Presentation on the History of the National Council

Noah: *Presentation (slides)*

Dr. Balcomb has also been through this journey. This is the 4th year of NC. The Charter does apply to us. It's the 5-year history. The Council System shares ownership between leaders and members, it's like Sung-sang/Hyung-sang balance. The idea is to give responsibility and recognize the vertical authority. Council is empowered to make decisions, under the leadership. It allows to make meaningful decisions. The primary role of the local council is to elect the church leader and financial role, to be a check and balance in handling finances. This is similar to our government, where the House is supposed to approve the budget. Councils, which work well will have this proper balance. The National Council started after IJN. HJM asked to form district councils, to elect district leaders, interim councils were formed. At the point of creation, everything was top down. I was the Chairman of the Interim Council. It was 18 people with HQ observers. It was charged with "let's make a plan". It had committees. The main activity was to draft the Charter. We had a lot of input, and feelings were hurt. People were concerned with the misuse of money. It was formed 4.5 years ago. At the end of that year, we came with the national charter. The role of Council is to review the Charter. You should be very familiar with it. People look for guidance in the local area, for example I'm going to Bronx next weekend. We started with district councils, and then understood that local councils are more important.

Shows the Charter.

3 parts: Charter for Local Churches, for District Councils, National Council. National Council unlike the local council is like a board of directors. We are looking to understand the role, as we are not controlling anything. Let's read the Charter as it will inform us what to do during next 2 days.

Amelia reads the Charter.

Noah: That helps to define what NC is doing.

Bruce: One provision said that we can make recommendations to the members of the Board?

Noah: In reality it has not happened. Where do you get new Board members? NC can propose a new Board member, when for example Mother passes.

Noah: First year: NR was the first Chair. First meeting was in LV. The initial work was done: we went through the Charter and determined main responsibilities. We formed several committees. We also decided to focus on a grants program. We were fortunate to have Christine Hempowicz, who had the professional background in grant reviewing. During fall meeting in DC, we reviewed grants, ranked and awarded them. Only top 5 were actually funded, about 95K, the rest did not find support with Dr Kim.

Catherine: What were the second and first gen number on the Council during the first year?

Noah: 6 people continued from Interim Council, 1 second gen. Every year there are 6 new people. The committees we set up – 6 standing committees, corresponding to duties in the Charter. Recommendations committee: for the church; second – Charter committee, responsible for proposing and reviewing changes to Charter, support local councils, improving the charter next year. At the fall meeting we would have a list of proposals. Grants committee is responsible for distributing grants. Judicial committee handles requests, e.g. whistleblower complaint. The committee hasn't been that busy. Finance committee is supposed to work with the Board and review finances, how money is spent and budgeted, to work with some Board members. In Year 1, Steven Jares was making sense of the financial statements. Last year we

requested to be involved in the budgeting. Executive committee represents the President, Vice-P, and Secretary. Most Council members sat on 2 committees. Finance Committee can look at the audited financial report. We reviewed the 2015 report in 2016.

Year 2 – 2015: David Burgess was the chair. Focus was on the recommendations. We made major Charter revisions. We conducted a Strategy Summit at East Garden, and conducted webinars for local councils. October Meeting in LV – We developed the procedure manual.

Year 3 – 2016 – Terry Yamane was the chair. April meeting in NY. We focused on creating a survey and focus on communications. Results of the survey were studied and discussed in Dallas.

October Meeting – Dr Kim went over strategic plan and we suggested to restart the grant program and made a proposal, and that members of the NC participate in the strategy work and development, and create a handbook of procedures for the NC.

Today we want to talk about: What committees we should have, their focus and outcomes.

Dr. Balcomb: a couple weeks ago I spent time with Terry and Alan to preview these issues. As I look back to the 4 years, I'm grateful to the people who came and served on the Council. Everyone came in good faith hoping to make good things happen. One thing I would like to reflect how many priorities should be continued, and what new ones should be considered. For example, we don't have committee on tribal messiahship.



Grants

Regarding grants, I discussed with Terry and Alan that I tried to promote the grants program. Dr Kim said that he would be for that, if the non-HQ sources are involved.

Dr. Balcomb: My ideas: 1) communication, as there is a gap of what members perceive of HQ and don't know resources, 2) issue of True Mother and communicating what I shared with you about her priorities. 3) Creating a culture of giving freely, to projects, to the church. We are in danger of losing the culture of tradition of freely giving what we have.

Noah: Last year we proposed to work together with the HQ teams on their strategy. Is that something you'd consider.

Dr. Balcomb: Yes, we should. It will take real effort.

Noah: one of the goals was to increase tithing. Can you think of any scenario to help the Council get involved? For example would members be more willing to give something to the fund administered by the NC.

Dr. Balcomb: Yes, it would be a creative suggestion.

Dr. Balcomb: Prays and leaves at 12:08

Lunch

1:55pm Reconvened.

Terry: This session we are going into Committees, goals for 2017, election of new officers, and everyone will select their committees. The meeting will end at 3pm.



Committees

Catherine: In Finance, we don't have much choice; but with grants, we might want to further discuss.

Noah: If we can make the grant program work, that's great of course. What is open, is to help young and inexperienced, e.g. to connect with the main ministries. Instead of having a single recommendations committee, we can have 3 subcommittees, witnessing, youth and blessed family areas. Everyone could be on one of those committees, and connect to HQ team. And another 2 committees – Charter revision and Judicial committee.

Catherine: the fundamental question is what's the purpose; We have to help HQ by advising.

Teresa: if you are representing the district, you'll be expounding on the issues above based on the needs of the community.

Catherine: If we were to do like Alan suggested – “to raise money ourselves and create a foundation (*reads the text sent by Alan*), it would be a private initiative and develop a grants program that will support local programs”.

Teresa: if we did the grants committee, it would be to make the proposal.

Noah: we would make the proposal, see what Dr Balcomb says, and then create the committee.

Noah: let's look at the Charter. What I'm proposing here is to do 2 things: put more energy into our recommendations. I'm proposing to have 3 recommendations committees along the 3 lines, witnessing, youth and blessed family. Everyone would be in one of them. And for the second committee, everyone can be on either grants, judicial, executive or charter committee.

Catherine: can we just be on one of the committees if you don't want to serve on 2?

Noah: It's always been that way in the past, and it proved to be working.

Eugene: Another point is communication. I know there is also tribal messiahship and the culture of giving. For me, communication seems to be a big part of what we are doing.

Atsushi: last year I was the Recommendation committee chair, we discussed the area of recommendations. This is how the witnessing summit came about. Then we focused on the communications. So we asked each district to prepare a report on the local community. We also discussed involvement of the 2nd gen.

Catherine: So if you are on a recommendation committee for the blessed family, you will come up with specific recommendations. And even if you are not on that committee, you can submit proposals to that committee.

Teresa: Yes. It can empower us in the field, if there is a separate committee.

Bruce: I bring up a proposal to create a separate communications committee.

Noah: I move that we adopt the following structure, where each Council member will be on one of the recommendations committees, and be on the Executive/Finance or Grants/Judicial committee consisting of the four members.

Bruce: I second it.

Teresa: Communication between NC members and local councils is very important. I don't think we should vote on that, as it should be our responsibility anyway – put our face out into the community, to be a part of the natural process.

Sarah: Will the recommendations committee be giving guidance only to HQ or also to the local council?

Teresa: It is about recommendations to HQ.

Noah: Yes, and it also can be helping to communicate something that HQ told us, like the blessing standard.

Eugene: I propose grants to be a separate committee and judicial an ad hoc committee.

Noah: I accept this **friendly amendment**.

Eugene: Can we discuss the communication segment with it?

Teresa: You can make a motion after that.

Noah: Or we can assign it to the other committee, if there is something we can do about it. The executive committee has the major responsibility.

Mari: I'm a little bit concerned that it will be another level. In HQ we are trying to create the collaboration that hits the district, local and national levels. It's a beautiful system that if works, will allow direct communication.

Catherine: I'd love to address some issues directly to the leadership, to Mari for example.

Mari: Absolutely, I spent a lot of hours of my week on the NC affairs. So you have my cell phone and email. For example, one of the questions we've been talking about with the outgoing chair, was the member care.

Noah: We can recommend to say "no" or recommend an amendment. As a Council we are not the executors, and we can't be. But we can do recommendations.

Eugene: Could we make a "member care" committee separate?

Teresa: So if we had a communications committee, that would be for the broad purpose of communications.

Noah: Not only the recommendations committee can make a recommendation. At the end of the year we will have 3 recommendations documents from the 3 committees, and everyone would be able to add to their recommendations.

Noah: Amendment: Propose that we have the 4th committee, Communications.

Eugene: seconded.

Bruce: Last year we thought that there was a breakdown in communication between HQ and members, and we created a survey to address that.

Eugene: My comment on that is that we've got to be on 2 of recommendations committees. For me "communication" is communicating with our membership. The survey is important, and we need to have a follow-up.

Teresa:

Voting. All in favor for adopting the Amendment to add Communications to the 3 recommendations committees?

9 “for”, 2 – “against”

Bruce: Amendment: I propose adding “Member Care” to the Blessed Family Committee.

Teresa: It’s a friendly amendment

Gary: accepted.

Sarah: What if we address what Mari said that it might bring confusion. What I heard Mari say, is that there is already something created in the system that HQ, district and local are already creating and a dynamic is developing. Adding our own committee may add confusion. (Discussion)

Teresa: any other amendments? No other amendments. Any questions?

Reads the whole proposal:

That NC adopts the following structure, where each Council member will be on one of the Recommendations (Witnessing/Tribal Messiahship, Youth, Blessed Family/Member Care and Communications) Committees, and be on either Executive/Finance/Judicial (Judicial being an ad hoc committee), Grants, or Charter Committee.

All in favor?

8 – “for”, 3 – “against”.

Election of Officers

Teresa: We will now vote on the position of Assistant Chair and the Secretary. At this point we ask for nominations. Qualifications for the Chair – should be the 2nd year.

Noah: I nominate Amelia as Vice-Chair. (Both Amelia and Catherine were nominated and declined.)

Noah: I nominate Sarah as Vice-Chair

Sarah: How much work is involved?

Teresa: explains the duties of Vice-Chair, and asks if there are any other nominations for the position of Vice-Chair?

Alan joined the meeting via phone

Teresa: we call the close of nominations and the vote for Sarah as Vice Chair, is unanimously favored.

Noah: Secretary duties: Terry is responsible for the notes, in the larger meetings we have an assistant.

Teresa: The Secretary has to edit the notes, check the confidentiality issues, etc.

We will now take nominations for the position of Secretary.

Amelia: I nominate Eugene

Seconded: Catherine

Eugene Hartnett: Accepted

Eugene: I nominate Terry.

Bruce: Seconded.

Teresa: Accepted

Teresa: Any more nominations for that position? No more? Let’s vote.

Teresa: Everyone write down one name or the other and Mari will count.

Mari counts the votes.

Mari: We have a tie. I will do the lottery.

It's Terry.

Teresa: Now we will choose our committees. Pick one from the new Recommendations Committees, and one from the standing Committees (Charter, Grants or Executive/Financial/Judicial). Make a list in your order of preference.

We will now take a short Break from 3:45 until 4:10pm.

Teresa: We counted the choices. There will be reports, and then you will meet with your committees.



Announcing Committees:

Witnessing/Tribal Messiah: Bruce, Gary, Atsushi, Michael

Youth: Noah, Sarah, Catherine and Bruce

Blessed Family/Member Care: Amelia, Atsushi, Curtis and Terry

Communications: Curtis, Michael, Catherine, Eugene

Charter: Noah, Gary, Amelia, and Eugene

Grants: Alan, Curtis, Michael, Eugene

Executive: Alan, Sarah, Terry, Mari

District Reports

All NC Representatives gave brief, 3 minute reports from their districts as to how the councils are functioning, how they relate to the NC representative and District Pastor, and reported any other bright spots or issues that could be beneficial to the whole. It was suggested that the NC Representative could meet on a regular basis, by zoom or conference call, to members of the local councils as a means of taking a role closer to the councils in the field.

Teresa: Please take the next 1.5 hr. to meet with your new committees. We will split the time in half so you can have time for meeting with both of your committees. Elect the Chair of the committee.

Committee Meetings were held in various locations.

The following are the elected Committee Chairs: *Witnessing: Bruce, Youth: Sarah, Blessed Family: Curtis, Communications: Eugene, Charter: Noah, Grants: Michael.*

Day 2, April 2nd



BUSINESS MEETING

Meeting began at 8.03am; Teresa begins with Prayer

Mari: Normally we meet as a Council every 2 months, on Wednesdays at 10pm. Next meeting will be June 7th, 2017 (Later changed to June 14th.) at 10pm. For the October meeting please check your calendars.

Alan connects to the meeting via Zoom

Mari: Preliminary date for the fall meeting – late October.

Teresa: it is important that everyone attends the 2 bi-annual meetings. We will now vote on all the proposed questions to come before the Council.

Motions

Noah: I move that we establish a grants program that will be based on internet funding to support worthy projects through the NC's website

Eugene: Seconded

Final Vote: 11 – in favor, 1 abstained (Bruce Sutchar), Motion Passed.

Noah: I move that we request budget for the best practices manual to be created for local and district councils around the country. Budget to be determined.

Bruce: Seconded.

After Discussion, Final Vote: All were in favor. Motion Passed by unanimous vote.

Mari: I want to propose a motion that would allow NC members who join the Council in the middle of a regular term serve for the next 2 years, instead of just 1 year. Otherwise there would be no continuity.

Eugene: I second that NC members who join in the middle of the term serve for the next 2 years, instead of 1 year.

Noah: That would be a charter revision. This first should go to the Charter committee.

Noah: I make a motion that we can have a discussion.

Bruce: Seconded.

Noah: It's really important that when people join the council, they give a 2-year commitment. If there is

no clarity, the continuity of the council will suffer. Compare it with the US Senate, they do the same. Instead we need to make sure that people understand the commitment they are making and take it very seriously.

Mari: I just want to make sure that it gets entertained.

Bruce: We can address it in the best practices. We have problems in our district, and our district pastor just appointed me to be a member of the NC and represent our district.

Teresa: The District council has responsibilities, and we should just continue educating them. Absolutely follow the Charter for continued clarity.

Mari: I want to withdraw my suggestion. But I want to propose a motion that district councils are informed of the best practices regarding that.

Teresa: On the motion that was made to allow a person to stay 2 years if they fill the term of the previous Council member.

Final Vote: Motion Opposed by unanimous vote. Motion does not carry.

If a person joins mid-term, they complete the term of the previous representative, then must go through the normal nomination/election process and be elected to a new term according to results in the district they represent.

Alan: I realized that I have a schedule conflict on June 7th. I have Monday 5th. What about **June 14?**

Teresa: June 14TH is the new date for our call.

Teresa: Any more questions? That closes the business meeting portion.



Discussion: Location for the Fall Meeting

Mari: If you are in NYC, then it's a guaranteed meeting with Dr Kim. We went to Las Vegas community and Texas. We usually do first year in NYC, and then somewhere else.

Locations Suggested: Morning Garden (Boston), IPEC (Las Vegas), Chicago (possible new church building), Minneapolis, Alaska, Bay Area (San Francisco), Los Angeles.

Mari: Homework. Look at your dates in October to tell me what's open. Email Alan, new Chair and copy Mari. And also meet with your district pastors/councils to share what happened.

If you want to suggest a location, email Alan and me with the prices of the hotels or the stay. **The deadline – end of April.** At the June meeting, we can vote on the date and location. If you have any local success stories, email the Secretary. HQ can also do the story on the council. Sharing local stories can be also a subject to the grants program.

At 9.15am Business Meeting ended and all departed for Service at 43rd St.

Final session begins at 1pm. Dr. and Mrs. Balcomb join the session.

Amelia and Catherine left for early flights.

Teresa: *(addressing Dr. Balcomb)* We have a few things to report from our sessions. We decided to rethink our committees. We wanted to align the committees more with the providential initiatives. We put our financial committee on temporary hold, we were about to put the grants committee on hold, but reconsidered the direction. The new committees and elected Chairs were reported to Dr. Balcomb.

Noah: Since the 3 new recommendations committees correspond to the 3 HQ ministries, we would like to suggest that the committees have a chance to communicate with Naokimi, Crescentia and other HQ team leaders.

Dr Balcomb: I think it will work very well. I'll make sure that the executives will be aware of this great opportunity.

Dr Balcomb: I suggest that you invite also Teresa Rischl and Tasnah Moyer, as well as Naokimi.

Noah: Also we noted that you said that some of them are very young, so they could benefit from our experiences.

Dr Balcomb: We are here far from the field, and I think communications is a very important area, and we desperately need to get a sense of how it sounds like to members in the field.. And of course those 3 priority areas. True Mother asked us to reorganize the movement based on those priorities, and almost nothing else. I think it's the right decision to pause on something that is not necessary right now. It might not be forever, but in the limited time we have, it's a good decision.

Bruce: I think we wanted to align ourselves with Mother's directions.

Dr. Balcomb: With regard to the grants, we are very interested in providing tribal messiahs with grants to up their game. Blessings can be pricey. Even with a modest Chinese buffet, none of us can really afford to buy 200 lunches. For example, the recent Blessing helped members to get together. We have a goal that each district has at least one such celebratory event, and we would be more than happy to support such an event.



Grants Committee Discussion

Noah: The Grants committee came up with a brilliant idea. They suggested to arrange for the people to have projects crowd-funded. We can help to facilitate that. We can advertise and ask members to make a (tax-deductible) contribution for that project. It could be a great project to get the funds, and it can be good for 2nd gen to contribute to the project of their choice.

Eugene: We were talking about a \$1,000 support ceiling. It's sometimes enough to do something, and it's not going to kill us if it falls. It will help people to stir the pot. Michael said that Kevin Thompson had a list of projects.

Michael: I remember Father was reading out all the different projects that state leaders could do, about 100 projects, like starting a foodbank or starting a newspaper. And everyone was overwhelmed, but he said, that you don't need to do it all, just a couple of things from this list or even just one.

Dr. Balcomb: I'm not totally satisfied with the familyfed website, it tends to get cluttered with lots of things. And we are going to revise it this year.

Noah: If we wanted to, do we have an option to manage donations by members?

Teresa: What about following up on their projects?

Noah: We were also thinking that we could rate the projects if we have technical abilities. And Council can help to rate that too, and give guidance on where to give the money.

Dr. Balcomb: I like the idea of adding reviews. I usually look at what other people say.

Eugene: Can we produce familyfed pins and sell them as a fundraiser for the NC?

Noah: I know one person who is selling the church symbol. . He does all kinds of things.

Dr. Balcomb: I'd like to suggest a more frequent interaction between us. I think we all agree that twice a year is not really enough. According to the Charter, the President can bring issues to the Council in advance. But we can have for each committee a zoom call or conference call. Zoom is easy, and free for the Council. We need to fill in the spaces between meetings. If we perceive the idea of committees meeting with HQ counterparts, I want to see how it's going. If the meeting is put on the calendar, I'll be there.

Another thing I encourage the Council to do is to go a have a meal with each of your district pastors. Please think about how you can love up your district pastor and his/her spouse.

Noah: We officially recommended to produce a best practices manual/booklet for the councils. A lot of problems that people have are because they don't have the right management skills, and don't have best practices. We want to make it as a user's guide covering all the key issues available on the website.

Teresa: Are there any more questions for Dr Balcomb?

Eugene: What is the plan for the 1m blessed couples?



Dr. Balcomb: The plan is to encourage tribal messiahs. 2/3 of this goal is assigned to ACLC. And they for the first time started to agree. There is a new spirit in ACLC. A month ago we had an ACLC meeting, where one couple, Abernathys, blessed 440 couples. It was rather interesting to hear that other pastors started asking questions. Did you use the official holy wine, etc. Dr Kim broke up this discussion and said that when you have done those blessings you are entitled to ask such questions. Go and do some first. Pastors took it pretty well. Rather than worrying whether everything was done properly, let's bless members. Pastor Barrett is really on a conservative way and that it has to be exactly by the book, but they don't have many couples. We believe that marriage blessing heals. To do that we need to encourage and empower our pastoral friends – be blessed themselves, even if their lives are not completely in order. I think that there will be a social change like with smoking which became non-cool. Gradually law and culture combining draw it out of existence. And I think that law with culture and God's power will eradicate non-blessed sexual behavior.

In our movement we have 2 kinds of philosophies of how to restore a nation:

Philosophy 1 (Korean): restoration takes place when 51% of the population are Unificationists, or a significant large minority.

Philosophy 2: for countries which are non-Christian; what matters is that people learn to reject the sinful

way of life.

If we provide an opportunity, God will give energy to heal and cleanse. So the country is restored when this seed starts to grow, and the behavior starts growing back to the healthy life. This country is based on religious diversity.



Reflections of the Weekend

Bruce: I'm reading about the life of George Whitfield. One man transformed the entire nation of America, and people said that the holy spirit was coming out of him, and they called it a great America. But I don't know where it is going. What's your honest feeling about that?

Gary: I can respond to that. A few weeks ago my wife and I decided to see Joel Osteen. The event place was in the area with lots of bars, and it was St Patrick's day. So there were all those people trying to find happiness through alcohol and others – through God. My personal feeling was that he was okay, but he has a huge ministry. And it was him, his wife and his mother, and the program was great. He challenged everyone to hang in for 2.5 hours and everyone would leave a changed person. And I took him on it. And when I left I felt it was an amazing experience. And another thing that was amazing, that he invited those who don't have a local church to plug into the 3 local pastors. One of those guys got up there and said, in 2017 our goal is to bless all the families in Tennessee. And my wife and I wanted to "sign up" and see how we can help.

Sarah: Coming here was a really fast process, and I learned a lot this weekend. It was a very cool weekend and very productive, and I feel more empowered to do something when I go home. I also feel that I can contribute to the ministry team home. I'm in school and work part-time. I'm graduating in a few months.

Michael: I just came on last April and I didn't know what it was about. And I think a lot of members don't know about it. Communication is a big priority. We had a very animated conversation about the communication between the 1st and 2nd gen. It was really great that Phoenix project was initiated, and I'm encouraged by that. And there is a lot we can do. My son is a videomaker, and maybe he could contribute in some way too.

Curtis: I didn't know what to expect when I was nominated. I was chosen because no one else really wanted it.

Dr Balcomb: Let's rephrase that; It was a fierce competition...and I won.

Curtis: It was a good experience coming here. At first I was intimidated by a large group of people, and it was nice to get to know people. I know a lot of the faces, but I didn't know the personalities. Noah kept me in the first DP workshop, and saved my life. I really enjoy this meeting and got a lot of fuel to do things when I get back. Looking forward to dinner with the district pastor.

Atsushi: Honestly, I actually felt some distance because most of you have the same experience, and I'm 10 years younger, and our experiences are different. Sometime I felt a little bit distant. I thought I wouldn't help too much. But this morning they shared their experiences with TPs of early ages. I felt that how wonderful these brothers and sisters. So through TPs' experiences I could start connecting.

Dr. Balcomb: For those who are in the 2nd year, it's time to think about the successor.

Eugene: I'm really happy and honored to be here. I didn't expect it, but I feel like that God wants me here for something, and I'm very encouraged by what's happening in heaven, we don't see it, and we feel how Father is feeling in a spiritual role. It's like communism took 2/3 of the world, but couldn't go any further. It's great to hear about the churches to do more blessings, and we need to do it too. I feel really encouraged by next 2020 vision. My brother when he was in college, and I was a kid, there was this student who would speak in their sleep in Greek, and no one could understand it. And when it was translated, we were told that he was talking about a short pope and long pope, and then there will 2023 with big breakthrough. And I looked at Father's 7-year courses, and his last one would end in 2023.

Teresa: Thank you everyone, it's my third year. And I'm happy to serve on the National Council. I let members know that we discuss important and relevant things at our meetings, and I don't know any other area where I could have this interaction with the whole country at once. My relationship with my district pastor is good and he supports me. Gary Chidester works so hard, and I'm happy to work with him in some capacity. A week before I had a conversation with our local councils in the district, and I hope to be able to encourage people in our new committees, and that I can direct them in a certain way. I'm happy to be back on the executive team, and I enjoy working with Mari.

Mari: It's a blessing to be here. I'm honored. I'm excited to see where this will bring us.

Fumiko Balcomb: I hope that everyone will share with their pastors. And this team is very good. Thank you for your contribution.

National Council April Meeting ends at 2pm.