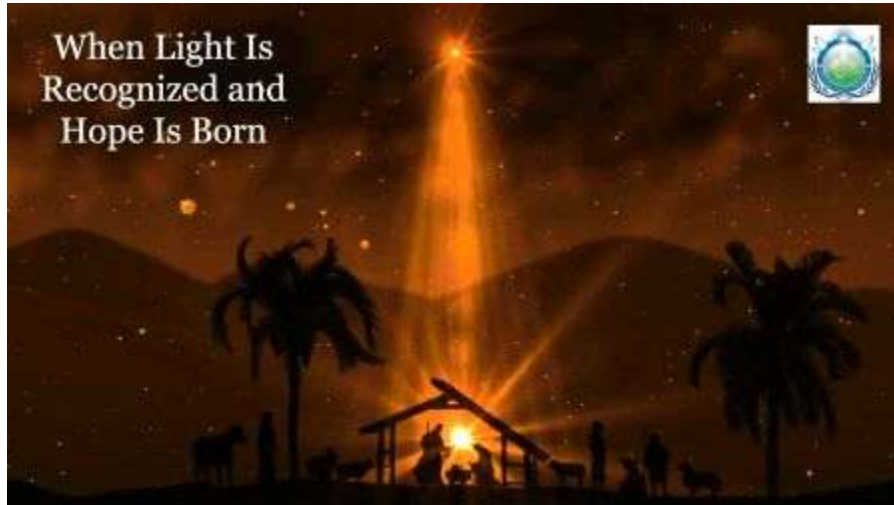


## UPF International: When Light Is Recognized and Hope Is Born

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### Epiphany and Orthodox Christmas: two feasts, one Christian testimony for our shared future

Epiphany on January 6 and Orthodox Christmas on January 7 are two moments within one continuous Christian narrative that is both ancient and urgently relevant. Epiphany points to divine truth revealed beyond familiar boundaries and offered to all peoples, calling believers to recognize the light wherever it appears. Orthodox Christmas speaks of incarnation, the entry of hope into human history through humility, family, and reverence for life in all its stages. Together, they affirm that faith is not merely received but consciously chosen and consistently practiced in relationships, institutions, and public life.

Taken together, Epiphany and Orthodox Christmas convey a single message expressed in two voices: recognition of divine light and the decision to embody it in concrete acts of solidarity and care. In their profound simplicity, these days invite an attentiveness of heart that allows faith to mature into discernment, humility, and a steady orientation toward the good.

The vision of the founders of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and the late [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#), is demonstrated through initiatives such as the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development ([IAPD](#)) and the Middle East Peace Initiative ([MEPI](#)), which foster dialogue and cooperation in divided contexts. Over many decades, including interfaith consultations in the Middle East, on the Korean Peninsula, and in other sensitive regions, these efforts have translated spiritual insight into practical pathways toward reconciliation, ethical leadership, and social cohesion.

The Gospel associated with Epiphany expresses this movement with striking clarity: "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned" (Gospel of Matthew 4:16). This dawning light is not only a private consolation; it is a summons to moral awakening and to responsibility for one another.

Building on this passage, World Scripture II presents a complementary teaching articulated by UPF founders: "The Kingdom of Heaven begins in the family." This insight affirms that spiritual awareness finds fulfillment in daily relationships and shared responsibility, where love, service, and respect for

human dignity are learned, tested, and passed on to the next generation.



In a global context marked by polarization, persistent conflict, and weakened trust in institutions, these observances function as a direct call to engagement rather than withdrawal. Authentic spiritual tradition does not retreat from society; it engages the world through conscience, service, and moral responsibility, contributing to the values embodied in the [United Nations Charter](#) and the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development. From the perspective of the Universal Peace Federation, this season highlights humanity as one family under God, where dignity precedes difference and belief takes form through care for others and commitment to the common good.

In this shared spirit, I extend my greetings to the [Ambassadors for Peace](#) of the Universal Peace Federation. As part of UPF's [100 Days of Harmony and Hope Campaign](#) leading to [World Interfaith Harmony Week](#) 2026, these observances highlight inclusion, interfaith dialogue, and cooperation in line with the United Nations [Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals](#).

To our Orthodox Christian Ambassadors for Peace, I convey warm Christmas greetings. May the celebration of the Nativity bring spiritual strength, inner peace, and renewed dedication to service for the sake of others, supporting your efforts to uphold human dignity within your communities and across nations.

To our Ambassadors for Peace from Western Christian traditions, I extend greetings on the occasion of Epiphany. May this observance deepen your calling to witness truth through humility, dialogue, and service, and may the light revealed in Epiphany guide your commitment to reconciliation and the protection of the common good in public and civic life.

I invite Ambassadors for Peace in all regions to engage actively in interfaith and intercultural events during this season, to initiate joint statements and service projects with local partners, and to contribute to UPF's ongoing campaigns for moral renewal and global harmony.

Dr. Tageldin Hamad, President, Universal Peace Federation