

February Newsletter UPF USA

Michael Jenkins
February 28, 2026



UPF USA BRIDGEBUILDER NEWSLETTER

February 2026

A monthly snapshot of peace stories, insight, and inspiration.

Peace Practice: International Women's Day

"In the new era we are about to enter, women will have the central role in leading humanity into love, forgiveness, harmony and cooperation." -Dr. Hak Ja Han

In honor of International Women's Day, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) celebrates the vital role women play in shaping a more peaceful and harmonious world. Dr. Hak Ja Han has long emphasized that the 21st century must become a culture of heart-centered leadership shared equally by women and men.

In 1992, Dr. Han and the late Sun Myung Moon founded the Women's Federation for World

Peace to empower women as leaders in global peacebuilding. Inspired by this vision, UPF continues to partner with women across faith and civic communities, honoring their indispensable contributions as bridge-builders, peacemakers, and champions of unity worldwide.



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An Evening of Vision, Music, and Solidarity in New Jersey

A recent PSWMAIalliance program in Clifton, New Jersey brought together faith leaders, community members, and guests for an inspiring celebration of interfaith cooperation and peacebuilding. The event featured uplifting musical performances, a presentation on “UPF USA Vision for 2026,” and the appointment of six new Ambassadors for Peace.

Keynote speaker Imam Mohammad Ali Chaudrey introduced his “Stand Up For the Other” pledge against religious bigotry—approved by the New Jersey State Assembly—with all attendees signing in solidarity. The program also highlighted the role of the arts in peacebuilding and reaffirmed UPF’s commitment to dialogue, shared values, and collaborative action.



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Ambassador for Peace Spotlight **Rev. Prescott Butler**



Rev. Prescott Butler, Pastor of Irvington United Methodist Church, is a dedicated Ambassador for Peace whose ministry reflects the vision of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF). A retired postal worker turned pastor, he is known for bringing together four congregations from three denominations to worship harmoniously in one shared space—an inspiring example of unity in action. He also previously served as president of the United Clergy of the Oranges and Vicinity.

Rev. Butler holds degrees from New York Theological Seminary, Kean University, and Rutgers University. Married for 33 years with four children and six grandchildren, he continues to model faith-centered leadership and a deep commitment to peace and community cooperation.

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Las Vegas Interfaith Program Celebrates Harmony and Peace

In observance of World Interfaith Harmony Week, an inspiring interfaith program was held in Las Vegas on February 21, bringing together Christian leaders and community members for dialogue and fellowship. Presenters representing the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) shared messages aligned with the vision of Hak Ja Han, emphasizing heart-centered leadership and the call to “Release the Mother of Peace.”

The program also included the appointment of new Ambassadors for Peace and concluded with warm fellowship over an international banquet, strengthening bonds and renewing a shared commitment to building a culture of peace.



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Women at the Center of Peacebuilding

Each March, the global community observes International Women's Day, established by the United Nations, recognizing the achievements of women and reaffirming the call for equality, dignity, and opportunity for all. For the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), this observance is more than a celebration—it is a reaffirmation of a founding principle: that women's leadership is essential to building a peaceful and harmonious world.



UPF's vision has been profoundly shaped by its co-founder, Hak Ja Han, who has consistently emphasized the transformative role of women in history and in shaping the future. She teaches, *"In the new era we are about to enter, women will have the central role in leading humanity into love, forgiveness, harmony and cooperation."* Expanding on this vision, she has declared:

"In the twenty-first century, women should play a major role in world history by serving as one of the wheels of the tractor pulling forward the construction of a peaceful world together with the men. Going beyond the century of power and technology, women will be the central axis in building the century of love and the peace culture, and their role will be more important than ever before."

These words affirm that the future must be shaped not by domination or division, but by compassion, partnership, and heart-centered leadership.

In 1992, Dr. Han and her husband, the late Sun Myung Moon, founded the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). The organization was established to empower women to take active leadership in peacebuilding and to advance a women-centered movement for global peace. Since its founding, WFWP has worked internationally to elevate the voices and influence of women across cultures and nations.

Inspired by this vision, UPF collaborates with women leaders in faith communities, government, civil society, academia, and the arts. Through interfaith dialogue, humanitarian initiatives, educational programs, and the global Ambassadors for Peace network, UPF encourages women to step confidently into roles that foster reconciliation, mutual prosperity, and shared values.

International Women's Day also reminds us of the persistent challenges women face worldwide, including inequality, violence, economic barriers, and limited access to education. UPF affirms that addressing these concerns is a shared responsibility. Empowering women strengthens families, stabilizes communities, and lays the groundwork for lasting peace.

As we honor women this March, UPF renews its commitment to advancing a culture in which men and women work together as equal partners. Guided by the inspiration of Dr. Hak Ja Han, the organization continues to champion a future where dignity is upheld, harmony is strengthened, and peace becomes a living reality for all.

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New Jersey Shares An Evening of Vision, Music, and Solidarity

A recent PSWM Alliance program brought together leaders, guests, and community members for an uplifting and impactful gathering centered on interfaith cooperation and peacebuilding. From the outset, the atmosphere was warm and inspiring, enhanced by three beautiful selections from the Elizabeth Children's Choir and a heartfelt solo performance by Nora Miyazawa.



Mr. Fortune Winter delivered a forward-looking presentation titled "UPF USA Vision for 2026," highlighting the connection between UPF Africa and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA. He offered insight into the organization's structure and emphasized the growing impact of the Ambassadors for Peace initiative in advancing moral leadership and global cooperation.

A powerful keynote address was given by Imam Mohammad Ali Chaudrey, a longstanding supporter of UPF and Ambassador for Peace. Speaking on interfaith harmony and religious freedom, he introduced his initiative, "Stand Up For the Other," a pledge against religious bigotry approved by the New Jersey State Assembly. In a moving moment of unity, all in attendance signed the pledge in solidarity.

The program also featured the appointment of six new Ambassadors for Peace by Mr. Barry Geller, UPF Regional Executive Director for the Northeast Region, along with a presentation of the Five Principles for Peace. Dr. David Eaton introduced the International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace, underscoring the vital role of the arts in building a culture of peace. Skillfully emceed by Pastor Barbara Robertson of NJ Family Church, the event reflected UPF's enduring commitment to strengthening communities through dialogue, shared values, and collaborative action.

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Ambassador for Peace Spotlight: Rev. Prescott Butler

Rev. Prescott Butler stands as a devoted servant-leader, respected pastor, and valued Ambassador for Peace whose life reflects a deep commitment to faith, unity, and community transformation. As Pastor of Irvington United Methodist Church, Rev. Butler has demonstrated a remarkable ability to build bridges across denominational and community lines, embodying the core principles of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF).



Married to his wife Sandra for 33 years and the proud father of four children and grandfather of six, Rev. Butler's ministry is grounded in strong family values and a heart for service. After retiring from a dedicated career with the U.S. Post Office, he answered a higher calling into pastoral ministry. His leadership at Irvington United Methodist Church has been marked by one particularly notable achievement: successfully managing four congregations representing three different denominations worshipping harmoniously in the same building. This accomplishment reflects the spirit of interfaith cooperation championed by UPF and the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC).

Following his first year in Irvington, Rev. Butler was also called to pastor the United Methodist Church of Orange. While serving in Orange, he became actively involved with the United Clergy of the Oranges and Vicinity. His peers recognized his leadership and integrity, electing him president—a role he faithfully fulfilled for four years. His ministry consistently emphasizes unity, shared purpose, and collaboration among clergy and congregations.

Rev. Butler continues to serve beyond the local church as Chaplain for the New Jersey United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA) and National Chaplain for A-PLUS. His pastoral care extends into professional communities, offering spiritual guidance and moral leadership in diverse settings.

Academically accomplished, Rev. Butler holds a Master of Divinity from New York Theological Seminary, an MBA in International/Global Studies from Kean University, and a Bachelor of Arts from Rutgers University, New Brunswick. His educational background, combined with his pastoral experience, equips him with both theological depth and organizational insight.

As an Ambassador for Peace, Rev. Prescott Butler exemplifies the UPF mission of promoting reconciliation, cooperation, and moral leadership. Through his unwavering faith, commitment to interdenominational harmony, and dedication to strengthening families and communities, he continues to be a powerful advocate for peace in action.

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Lighting Candles, Building Bridges: An Interfaith Call to Unity

On Saturday, January 10, 2026, the Indianapolis Chapter of the Universal Peace Federation—USA co-hosted the Light of Hope Religious Freedom Forum in partnership with the Hindu Temple of Central Indiana, the Islamic Center of Muncie (IN), the Nur-Allah Mosque, and the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). The forum brought together five faith leaders

from diverse religious traditions for a thoughtful panel discussion focused on resolving differences among faiths and strengthening mutual support to foster unity.



The program was skillfully moderated by Dr. Madelene Alexander, a member of the Indianapolis Family Church and the Women's Federation for World Peace. Panelists included Dr. Vidya Kathik, representing the Hindu Temple of Central Indiana; Mrs. Bibi Bahrami, President of the Islamic Center of Muncie and founder of Afghan Women's and Kids' Educational Necessities (AWAKEN), offering a Middle Eastern Islamic perspective; and Imam Mikal Saahir, spiritual leader of the Nur-Allah Mosque, who shared insights from the African American Muslim experience.

Christopher Olson, a former missionary to Indonesia and South America for more than thirty years, represented FFWPU and spoke about sharing the love of True Parents through authentic relationships rather than doctrinal instruction alone. Pastor Robert Abendroth, co-pastor of the Indianapolis Family Church, provided an in-depth explanation of the situation facing Dr. Hak Ja Han, co-founder and spiritual leader of FFWPU, who is currently being held in South Korea without having been convicted of any crime.

The theme "Light of Hope" was chosen to reflect the universal symbolism of light as an expression of God's truth and love overcoming darkness—an image found across religious traditions such as Hanukkah in Judaism, Christmas in Christianity, and Diwali in Hinduism. This symbolism was brought to life through a candle-lighting ceremony. A central tall candle representing Holy Mother Han was placed at the center of the display, while each panelist entered carrying a candle symbolizing their faith. Following the discussion, audience members were invited to add their own candles, visually expressing unity among all faith communities.

The event also held special significance for the Peace Starts With Me Alliance, as Imam Mikal Saahir was formally installed as a new Ambassador for Peace. He joined fellow Ambassador Mrs. Bibi Bahrami, who received her AFP certificate more than two years ago. Although Imam Saahir is a student of Imam W. Deen Mohammed and could focus primarily on racial divisions in America, he instead embraces people of all races, religions, and ethnicities, working consistently throughout the community to promote unity and mutual respect.

Imam Saahir's response following the program offered a moving testament to the growing impact of the Peace Starts With Me Alliance. After learning about Holy Mother Han's situation, he asked his wife to take a photograph of him standing beside an image of True Parents—a quiet but deeply meaningful gesture. This experience echoed a separate occasion at another prayer meeting, where a Christian minister from Chicago independently expressed sorrow upon hearing of Holy Mother Han's imprisonment and offered a public prayer for her safety and protection.

The event was a testament to the power of interfaith dialogue and mutual support in fostering unity across America.

These moments reflect a broader and deeply encouraging trend: faith leaders across America are opening their hearts, responding with compassion, and standing in solidarity for peace and religious freedom. The Peace Starts With Me Alliance is clearly touching lives and inspiring unity at a profound level.

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We invite you to join our effort, share your ideas, and contribute to this global effort to build a world of sustainable and lasting peace.

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