

## UPF UK: Universal Values: Local Dialogue the Foundation of Peaceful Societies

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**Universal Peace Federation - UK** *A Global Network of Peacebuilders*



### Community and Universal Values: Local Dialogue as the Foundation of Peaceful Societies

#### Week 12 of the 100 Days of Harmony and Hope Campaign (January 9–15)

##### Why community is the living foundation of peace

Week 12 of the [100 Days of Harmony and Hope campaign](#), observed from January 9 to 15, centers on community and universal values as the living foundation of peaceful societies. As the campaign enters its concluding phase, attention shifts from individual initiatives to the shared ethical frameworks that sustain dialogue, trust, and cooperation at the local level. Peace is not built only through agreements among institutions, but through communities that cultivate shared values and practice civil discourse amid diversity.

##### Women farmers, family farming, and community resilience



This emphasis on community resonates with the United Nations decision to recognize 2026 as the [International Year of the Woman Farmer](#), highlighting the central role of women in agriculture as anchors of food security, social cohesion, and sustainable livelihoods. This focus also aligns with the [United Nations Decade of Family Farming \(2019–2028\)](#), which recognizes family farmers as custodians of local knowledge, shared values, and social cohesion within rural communities. As the international community looks toward the International Year of the Woman Farmer in 2026, the Decade of Family Farming provides a broader framework that connects women's leadership in agriculture with intergenerational responsibility and community resilience. Women farmers sustain rural communities, transmit knowledge across generations, and serve as stewards of land, natural resources, and human capital. Their contribution directly advances [Sustainable Development Goal 2](#) on zero hunger, [Sustainable Development Goal 5](#) on gender equality, and [Sustainable Development Goal 15](#) on life on land. By strengthening women's leadership at the community level, societies reinforce the ethical and social foundations upon which

peaceful and resilient communities depend.

This approach is supported by the mission of the International Association for Peace and Economic Development ([IAED](#)), which seeks to integrate ethical reflection with policy dialogue and economic cooperation. Within this context, the [Universal Peace Federation](#) advances its vision of the moral foundations of democracy. UPF affirms that democratic systems depend not only on institutions and procedures, but on conscience, responsibility, and respect for human dignity.

### **UPF in action during this week**

The historical record of UPF and its predecessor initiatives during this period of January illustrates how community values have long been translated into global engagement. Archival reports also document concrete UPF initiatives held precisely during this week in different years, demonstrating how universal values are enacted through community based dialogue and cooperation.

On January 13, 1968, the International Federation for Victory Over Communism was founded in Seoul, Republic of Korea, at a time when ideological confrontation threatened global stability. While shaped by the Cold War context of its era, the initiative reflected an early effort to articulate moral and spiritual responses to ideological conflict, emphasizing values and conscience alongside political and economic considerations.

This initiative reflected a commitment to moral responses over ideological division, aligning spiritual conscience with United Nations calls for dialogue. From its earliest years, [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#) the founders of the Universal Peace Federation and its predecessor initiatives, consistently distinguished between ideologies and people, affirming respect for nations and their citizens regardless of political systems and [rejecting hostility toward peoples on the basis of ideology](#).

From January 14 to 15, 1996, the Summit Conference for World Peace convened at the Victoria Plaza Hotel in Montevideo, Uruguay. The gathering brought together political leaders, religious figures, academics, and civil society representatives from Latin America and beyond, emphasizing dialogue, reconciliation, and shared responsibility as pathways to peace in post-authoritarian and transitional societies. The Montevideo summit underscored the importance of regional cooperation and inclusive dialogue in strengthening democratic culture and social trust.

On January 15, 2001, the World Media Conference was held at the Keio Plaza InterContinental Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. Media professionals, scholars, and public leaders examined the ethical responsibilities of journalism in an increasingly interconnected world. The conference highlighted the role of responsible media in shaping public discourse, countering misinformation, and supporting democratic values through accuracy, fairness, and respect for human dignity. These themes remain acutely relevant as digital communication continues to transform community life and political engagement.

The period from January 8 to 15, 2012, was marked by international rallies and gatherings supporting the efforts to promote reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula and advance global peace.

A further illustration of this approach took place from January 11 to 13, 2015, when the Universal Peace Federation convened the Middle East Peace Initiative conference titled "[Jerusalem and the Holy Sites: A Call for Peace at a Time of Crisis](#)." Held in Jerusalem, the gathering brought together Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders, scholars, and civil society representatives. The meeting centered on interreligious prayer, ethical reflection, and dialogue on the status of holy sites. Rather than pursuing political negotiation, the conference emphasized moral responsibility, mutual respect, and community level trust as prerequisites for sustainable peace in one of the world's most sensitive regions.

Community based peacebuilding is also reflected in local initiatives documented during this same week. On January 15, 2019, UPF's St. Petersburg chapter opened the winter season of the [Peace Road](#) initiative with a [Nordic walking event](#) that combined physical activity, informal dialogue, and civic engagement. Conducted in partnership with local civil society organizations and involving UPF [Ambassadors for Peace](#), the event demonstrated how shared experiences and simple acts of cooperation can strengthen social bonds and translate universal values into daily practice.

This same week also carries significance in more recent history. On January 9, 2022, the [prayer rally](#) was held at the Cheongshim Peace World Center, South Korea. The gathering brought together leaders and participants from multiple Christian denominations, Buddhist communities, and other faith traditions who joined in prayer and reflection for peace, reconciliation, and the future of the Korean Peninsula. While rooted in a spiritual format, the rally expressed an inclusive orientation toward interreligious cooperation and moral solidarity. Its timing at the beginning of the year positioned it as a moment of ethical and spiritual preparation, pointing forward to subsequent initiatives dedicated to interfaith harmony and dialogue. In this sense, the 2022 rally illustrates how shared spiritual intention can serve as a foundation for broader community engagement and for the interreligious efforts highlighted in the weeks that follow.

Reflecting on the deeper rationale for such cooperation, Sun Myung Moon articulated this principle clearly in his speeches in 1985 (World Scripture II): "Through interreligious dialogue and harmony we should realize one ideal world of peace, which is God's purpose of creation and the common hope of humankind." These events mobilized communities across regions, emphasizing unity, moral responsibility, and the power of collective commitment to overcome historical division. They reflected a consistent emphasis on community engagement as a driver of broader peacebuilding efforts.

### **What Week 12 asks of us** **A simple "local dialogue" model partners can replicate**

During Week 12, the Universal Peace Federation calls on its Ambassadors for Peace, partner organizations, educators, legislators, faith leaders, and community representatives to organize local dialogues rooted in universal values. By supporting women as leaders in agriculture, fostering ethical cooperation between faith and environmental initiatives, and promoting civil discourse through academic and parliamentary engagement, UPF affirms that peaceful societies are built from the community outward.

**Universal Peace Federation UK will organise a World Interfaith Harmony Week event on January 27th from 6 pm, 'Building Bridges: Faith Communities Advancing Peace and Inclusion'. This will be our local dialogue at the conclusion of the 100 day campaign.**

The vision guiding this work is the conviction that humanity belongs to a single family, bound by shared moral responsibility, as one family under God, where conscience guides actions toward living for others. We affirm that when communities nurture conscience and mutual respect, they fulfill our shared duty to build enduring peace.

### **Join the Ambassadors for Peace network**

If you believe peaceful societies rest on conscience, responsibility, and human dignity, [become an Ambassador for Peace](#) and receive updates, invitations, and opportunities to collaborate.

### **Stay connected beyond the 100 Days**

[Subscribe to UPF-UK updates](#) for upcoming dialogues, interfaith initiatives, and resources on ethical leadership, community cohesion, and peacebuilding in practice

**Help carry this work beyond the 100 Days - [Become a Monthly Supporter and Sustain Peacebuilding](#)**

As the campaign concludes, your donation enables UPF-UK to keep investing in the "community infrastructure" of peace: trusted local dialogue, ethical leadership, and initiatives that build cohesion across differences. One-time or monthly giving helps us plan with confidence and expand our impact.

### **Related Articles:**

[100 Days of Harmony and Hope](#) "Explore the 100 Days of Harmony and Hope campaign"

[World Interfaith Harmony Week](#) "Interfaith collaboration and community dialogue"

[Canvas of Cultures - A Celebration of Art, Poetry, and Music - 25th January 2025](#)

### **Broader UPF Context**

[UPF Celebrates 20 Years of Global Peacebuilding](#)

[Dr Hak Ja Han - Mother of Peace, A Life Dedicated to Unity, Family, and Global Peacebuilding](#)

[Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, Universal Values](#) "Why universal values matter for peacebuilding"