

WFWP Las Vegas, USA: Bridge of Peace, Begins with a Change of Mind

Adia Lancaster
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On October 11, 2025, the Las Vegas chapter of WFWP hosted a profoundly moving Bridge of Peace ceremony at the West Charleston Library Theater in partnership with the Peace Starts With Me Alliance, consisting of FFWPU, CARP, and FEEF. About fifty attendees gathered under this year's theme, "Peace Begins with a Change of Mind," a reminder that true peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the courage to realign our thoughts, hearts, and relationships. Rooted in the original meanings of repentance - metanoia in Greek (to change one's mind) and teshuvah in Hebrew (to return) - the ceremony invited participants into a living experience of seeing one another anew and returning to the deeper truth that we are one human family.



The program opened with a welcome from MC Adia Lancaster, followed by a grounding sound bath and meditation led by Veronica Lopez, which helped participants shift into a posture of presence and

receptivity. The dynamic keynote address was delivered by Jerushia McDonald, Ambassador for Peace, who offered an impassioned call for women to rise as leaders, bridgebuilders, and protectors of peace in a fractured world. Her words set the tone for a ceremony that blended stillness, reflection, cultural expression, and heartfelt action.

A traditional Korean dance offered by Sung's Korean Dance Academy lifted the atmosphere with beauty and reverence, preparing the way for the heart of the gathering, the Bridge of Peace crossings. Fifteen pairs crossed the bridge, each representing a unique story of reconciliation, healing, or unity: Ukrainian and Russian sisters walking hand in hand; Native and Christian elders choosing respect and repair over historical pain; a mother/daughter representative pair bridging generational divide; Japanese and Korean sisters honoring the healing of ancestral wounds; and interfaith crossings between Muslim, Jewish, and Christian women standing together in solidarity. One of the most emotional moments came during the African diaspora crossing, where one sister began to weep immediately upon meeting her partner, embodying what it looks like when history, heart, and hope meet in a single moment. Several pairings formed spontaneously on-site, confirming that the longing for unity is real, present, and active. Many audience members, including the venue technician, were visibly moved to tears.



The ceremony closed with a beautiful musical offering of "Let There Be Peace on Earth" by Hannah Arthur, followed by a collective blessing led by Rev. Dr. Linda Lucero Nishikawa (Pueblo, Hunka Lakota), President of Sacred First Nations for Peace. A beautiful wave of generosity flowed as attendees offered nearly \$300 in spontaneous donations, including one attendee who gave \$100 after her son volunteered as a stagehand. The library staff expressed that this was "the best event we've ever hosted here," and invited the team to return for future programs. Several walk-in guests from the library joined the gathering simply out of curiosity, a living symbol that peace, when embodied, attracts.

This Bridge of Peace ceremony confirmed two things: there is a deep hunger for authentic reconciliation and there is a growing call for greater collaboration beyond our internal membership. While the event was a spiritual success, one key takeaway for our team is the need for broader delegation and community partnership to avoid burnout and widen ownership. The desire of participants to stay connected, support future gatherings, and invite friends is a clear sign that Las Vegas is becoming fertile ground for peace-building work that can ripple far beyond our local chapter.