

UPF New Zealand: Family Day Event in Auckland Features Youth Empowerment

Geoffrey Fyers
May 24, 2025



Auckland, New Zealand – Celebrating the UN Day of Families, UPF-New Zealand held an event on May 24, 2025, at the Kelston Community Centre in the vibrant setting of Te Pae o Kura, Hikurangi. With approximately 60 attendees, the gathering provided an enriching experience centred around the theme: Family-oriented Policies for Sustainable Development.



The event commenced with an opening prayer by **Apostle Shannon Leilua** from the Ratana Church, followed by the UPF UN Family Day Statement presented by **Mr. Geoffrey Fyers**, Secretary General of UPF-New Zealand. This spiritual and formal beginning set the tone for an afternoon filled with meaningful dialogue, reflection, and inspiration.

Key highlights included presentations by civil society activist **Mrs. Anne Degia-Pala**, QSM, and **Mr. Kenji Watanabe**, UPF-NZ chairman, which underscored the importance of family-oriented policies in

shaping sustainable futures. Musical performances by IKPACT members Suresh Trivedi and Shashi, coupled with the vibrant song by FFWPU Youth, brought warmth and joy to the occasion.



Participants were particularly moved by the youth empowerment program, Preparing for Marriage and Family. Presented by **Sayo Okamoto**, FFWPU youth volunteer, and **Amon Watanabe**, FFWPU youth representative, this session inspired attendees across generations by emphasizing the critical role of nurturing the right mindset in youth, a foundation upon which our collective future rests.



The event concluded with thoughtful remarks by **Dr. Will Flavell**, Henderson Massey Local Board Member, followed by group photos, refreshments, and networking. The gathering not only uplifted the value of family but also left a lasting impact by empowering young minds to embrace their roles as torchbearers of a sustainable and harmonious world.

The reflections shared by participants highlighted the importance of such initiatives in fostering intergenerational dialogue and inspiring transformative change. Indeed, the event proved to be a resounding testament to the enduring power of

family and youth in shaping brighter futures for all.

