

## ACLC's Peace Starts With Me interfaith Conference at IPEC in Las Vegas

Michael Jenkins  
December 16, 2017



From December 12 to 15, religious leaders from a wide variety of denominations gathered once again for a Peace Starts With Me interfaith conference with the theme, "A New Paradigm: Building God's Kingdom on Earth" at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) in Las Vegas.

The 4-day conference, organized by the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), was packed with spiritual inspiration that helped the participants gain a deeper understanding of not only True Parents, but also one another. The first day established focused on the familial relationship between God and humankind, God's vision for the family as the foundation for heaven on earth, and the roles True Parents and Christians play in building this world of love and unity. The congregation gave standing ovations, cheering on the teachings of God, as they heard speeches from Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, Jr., ACLC Co-Chairman; Pastor T.L. Barrett, the Senior Pastor of the Life Center Church of God in Christ; and Apostle Floyd E. Nelson, Presiding Bishop of the International Bible Way Church.



The next day, the ministers learned more about the Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony and its importance in bringing humankind back to God's embrace. ACLC Co-Chair Dr. Michael Jenkins provided a history of ACLC led by True Parents, while multiple ministers, including Rev. Mark and Minister Edna Abernathy from the Connect Point Church in Atlanta, delivered personal testimonies about the significant impact the Blessing and True Parents have had on their marriage and spiritual relationship with God.

Bishop Dr. Karen Hollie Thibodeaux, President of the Grace Theological Seminary, specifically shared about the past rallies in Korea, and the importance of reunifying Korea in this world full of division.

Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, FFWPU Continental Chairman of North America, also shared about the critical role Christianity plays in fulfilling God's providence, as well as their significance in bringing about the miracle that was True Parents at the Garden.



As the lack of unity, love, and God in the world was especially apparent after the recent mass shooting in Las Vegas, the religious leaders went to Mandalay Bay State to join their hearts together to pray for victims of all tragedies. The religious leaders fed off one another's strong heart for God to create a powerful, selfless prayer of unity.

While the convocation was filled with numerous moving moments, arguably the most moving was its conclusion. After Bishop Stallings and Dr. Michael Jenkins spoke about bringing reconciliation between God's people, all of the participants engaged in a foot washing ceremony of repentance and forgiveness. In repenting the historical suffering of people of color that continues to this day, many of the Caucasian religious leaders at the conference shed tears as they deeply apologized to the religious leaders of color. The ministers of color responded with love. In response to the tears of their peers, they also shed tears. As the Caucasian ministers washed their feet, the ministers of color returned an embrace. By washing the feet of their peers—the ultimate symbol of humility in Christianity—the religious leaders were able to come together on a deeper level, understanding the painful, yet loving and forgiving heart of God through one another.

