



World Interfaith Harmony Week

Prague, Czech Republic, February 4, 2018

By Juraj Lajda

On February 4th, 2019 the Czech UPF chapter together with the Christian Community organized an interfaith gathering on the occasion of World Interfaith Harmony Week. The motto of the meeting was “Passing on the tradition and faith and the freedom of choice.”

After short welcoming speeches by Rev. Tomas Boněk, pastor of the Christian Community and Dr. Juraj Lajda, president UPF, the representatives of world religions joined in a symbolic ceremony of lightening the candles and pouring out water into one bowl which represented harmony among different religions. During this ceremony each representative person expressed some wisdom, thought or wish related to his or her religion.

After this solemn ceremony the audience, about 40 in number including the second-generation missionaries from around the world, we created two interactive groups to discuss the motto of this year’s World interfaith harmony meeting. We were discussing the ways how the first generation can pass on their faith to the second generation. This topic concerns all the religions. The parents believe in some form of religion which they consider to be the best in their lives and would like to see their children also to follow this path. On the other hand, the children have their freedom to choose and it is not automatically that they accept the religion of their parents. Where is the border of duty and the freedom of choice? We could hear experiences from both sides – from the side of parents and also from the side of second-generation children.

After a short cultural performance there were reports from each group. These were the main points:

- The parents should take care of children and give them love and create a goods environment for them
- The parents should respect the freedom of choice of their children to decide if they will follow their religion or not
- The community life is very important for the children

This year’s meeting was very useful and inspiring. The participants could be reminded about the practical problems they face in their communities and about the importance of the harmony among religions. We are planning to hold more meetings in the coming months and prepare an interfaith conference.





