

Universal Peace Federation Illinois' American Leadership Conference

Bruce Sutchar
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Springfield, IL – Through the inspiration of Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA Illinois leader, John Prevost, the Chicago chapter of UPF USA decided to hold their 2015 annual American Leadership Conference (ALC) in Springfield on June 20, 2015. For the six weeks preceding the event our Church Pastor, the WFWP leaders and the UPF leaders all met every Tuesday evening to work out all of the details. Mr. Bruce Sutchar, Secretary General, UPF Chicago, realizes now that all the preparation was absolutely needed.



In the Land and Legacy of Abraham Lincoln

Every state in America is unique. If you want to see Niagara Falls you have to go to New York. If you want to visit the Grand Canyon, then Arizona is your destination. You can go to Washington, D.C. to see the Lincoln Memorial, but if you really want to feel the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln, then you must visit Illinois.

In recent years, Americans have heard about the Bush Library in Texas, and the Clinton Library in New York, but about 10 years ago the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum was erected in Springfield, Illinois. It is a beautiful state of the art facility that one needs at least 2 ½ hours to even begin to explore it all.

The Chicago chapter of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA rented a tour bus and, at 7:00am, participants loaded up and headed the 200 miles downstate from Chicago to the Capitol City of Illinois (they wanted to keep the seat of government as far away from a major city as possible).

The chapter's first stop was Lincoln's tomb. He is buried there along with his wife Mary Todd Lincoln and three of his four boys. Only his eldest son Robert would make it to adulthood and he is buried in the Arlington National Cemetery.



As participants walked out of the tomb, they were greeted by a friendly Dominos Pizza Delivery Truck and 40 of them chowed down to an outdoor picnic lunch. These excited participants then hustled over to Lincoln's 1860 home in an area where the neighborhood is preserved to look exactly as it did when Lincoln lived there before he became President and moved to Washington, D.C.. It was a beautiful and historical experience. From there, participants headed over to the Illinois State Capitol—an incredibly ornate and historical building. Our state senator had reserved a room for us in the Illinois Senate hearing room. There, the chapter was greeted by the speaker who herself had driven 3 ½ hours to join us.

She talked deeply and personally about "Lincoln's preparation for leadership." What he had learned in his time in the Illinois legislature. She implored our young people to get involved in politics. She said one needs three things to be successful: 1) a love for politics; 2) the knowledge, understanding and confidence to know that that you are as good and can accomplish as much as anyone, and; 3) a commitment to honesty.

The speaker picked at the brains of those young people in the audience and successfully involved them in her lecture. The result of this was that the next day at Sunday Service, two of these young adults gave very exciting and stimulating testimonies about both their trip and the speaker's talk.

The program concluded with the presentation of the Ambassadors for Peace plaque to our speaker and her husband, who is also a college professor.

Afterward the trip concluded with a drive around the Old State Capitol where both Lincoln and more recently President Barack Obama each announced their candidacies for the position of President of the United States of America.