

Ambassadors for Peace Network in New Zealand

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A Monthly Meeting for Ambassador of Peace in New Zealand held on November 14, 2015

By UPF New Zealand: The endless threats to the world we live in today highlight the ever important peace we all long to be enveloped with every moment of our lives. Fresh global incidents of violence which resulted in heart-breaking loss of lives should no longer be set aside easily; nor should we go through our daily lives idly, hoping that things will get better without us being involved actively to emphasize the need for lasting peace and harmony on Earth. The Ambassadors For Peace (AFPs) network in New Zealand hence gathered on the 14th of November at Parnell Peace Embassy under the theme, “Peace Through Communication” as part of our continual effort to cultivate peace and harmony, and establish a lasting foundation that may spread its wings to various corners of the world.

Initiated by our own AFPs, the gathering was an afternoon forum discussing the importance of communication in realizing peace, starting from within ourselves to various aspects of inter-personal relationships. The panel of speakers were AFP Virin Gomber, Family Program Manager for Peace Foundation; AFP Tracey Deane, Community Leader and Entrepreneur at South Waikato; and AFP Rev. Sirr Christoffersen, Head of Universal Worship in New Zealand, for the Sufi Order International.

The afternoon began with a call by AFP Morrin Cooper, MC for the forum, for a moment of silence to share our hearts with the ones closely affected by the recent terrorist attacks in France and Beirut. It was then opened in prayer by Mr. Peter Holdem, UPF Coordinator at Up North; and followed by Mr. Geoffrey Fyers, UPF-NZ Secretary General, who stood up to give welcoming remarks and an introduction to the panel of speakers.



AFP Virin Gomber then took the opportunity to give a concise and profound presentation on communication. He explained the importance of communication with ourselves and others; the former inducing positive or negative impacts within us depending on the things we tell ourselves every day, while the latter focusing on building rapport as a bridge of communication through listening, understanding and responding to build trust and love with our communication partner. He believes Ambassadors For Peace are people who have the potential to transform the world through the communication we engage with our own selves and with the people around us, and encourages everyone present to establish good rapport and empower others through peaceful communication.

The next speaker, AFP Tracey Deane drew everyone's attention as she raised thought-provoking questions with regards to how much effort we need to exert in order to establish peaceful communication. As she recognized good, healthy and responsible communication as being critical to achieve peace on Earth, she shared the need to establish peaceful communication on many levels; starting from within ourselves, to the family and to other people around us. Although it is often a lifelong work-in-progress, she believes that this is what being Ambassadors For Peace is all about: that as people put in positions of authority and responsibility, AFPs need to consciously improve the way we communicate and along the way possibly impart them to others in peace. There are many ways to communicate, but she emphasized the importance of seeking first to understand before being understood, before reassuring that if all of us do our best to communicate respectfully and responsibly in ways that we ourselves would like to be communicated to, we will undoubtedly create a peaceful world with our own hands.



The last speaker of the forum, AFP Rev. Sirk Christoffersen, echoed the two-way nature of communication as an important aspect we need to observe and exercise. As a psychoanalyst, he commended all the speakers for their presentations which summed up almost everything that need to be understood about communication; before adding extra dimensions to illustrate the importance to listen and to communicate for peace. For the former, he reminded us that we have two ears and one mouth, hence twice the effort required to listen before we speak; while for the latter, he shared a story depicting humanity that has fallen into a state of incommunicable chaos even though we are all parts of one body, simply because we neglected positive communication in pursuit of our selfish desires. He urged us to take extra caution in the way we communicate with one another, so as to establish building blocks for peace that will allow internal healing to take place naturally; within ourselves and with the people around us.

As all the speakers took their seat for Question and Answer session, the floor was then opened for anyone wanting to raise questions revolving around Peace through Communication. Thought-provoking questions were discussed successively, each giving rise to meaningful dialogues between everyone involved. New Ambassadors for Peace were then invited to stand in order to receive their respective awards, given by Rev. Julius Gicole, Director of UPF-NZ and his wife Mrs. Jasmin Gicole. They are: Mr. Arunjeev Singh, Mr. John Corcoran, Mr. Tej Ram, Mr. Qareebullah Abduljabbar and Mr. Azeem Zafarullah. We are grateful for this opportunity to expand our network to like-minded people whose hearts and minds are also centred upon the realization of peace and goodness to the environment around us.

A short introduction to World Fishing Sports Federation NZ was then given by its Chairman, Mr. Leon Pogoni who shared with us the reason behind its conception along with its methods in achieving peace. Its founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon believed that the ocean holds infinite potential to solve the problem of world hunger and the future of humanity is closely tied with our ability in adapting ourselves to incorporate it as our eventual habitation.

Before we close the session formally, Rev. Julius Gicole gave a short closing remark, applauding the initiatives and the well-prepared presentations of our very own Ambassadors For Peace on that day. It was also appropriate for us to gather in light of the recent concerning developments around the world that threatens the very existence of peace. He encouraged everyone to be free to express their ideas for our network to keep on promoting peace in our own little ways, because this is the way we substantialize ideal environment that we want to live in, one step at a time. The meeting was followed by a light supper where everyone had a more personal encounter and shared precious things with one another.

It is often easy to set aside seemingly simple gatherings to talk about the importance of peace. As human beings, we often take things for granted; however, may the reality that we are enveloped in continue to remind us its paramount importance; not just for ourselves, but for our loved ones and for the future generation.

