

UPF and Swedish-Thais' Family Celebration and a World Peace Awards ceremony

Ing-Marie Hedberg Kikuchi
June 30, 2018



Stockholm, Sweden -- Members of the Swedish-Thai community took part in a UPF Family Celebration and a World Peace Awards ceremony.

This event was envisioned by Buddhist Abbot Pramaha Boonthin, a UPF Ambassador for Peace, and organized jointly by the Swedish chapters of UPF and Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an affiliated organization.

The main event in the Family Celebration, which took place on June 30, 2018, in the Stockholm Courtyard Marriott Hotel, was the World Peace Blessing of 21 Swedish-Thai couples.

Three lecturers from Thailand were invited to Stockholm to give presentations of the UPF Peace Principles in the Thai language: Mrs. Sangkom Netsopa, Dr. Ronachit Phutthala and his wife, Mrs. Nualchan Phutthala.

Two Thai members of FFWPU who live in Europe came to help: Mrs. Chatiboot Choopojcharoen (Andorra) and Mrs. Kanyapat Kanchanapen Latkam (Barcelona, Spain). They presented very good lectures and talks that gave a lot of joy and inspiration.

In preparing the event, UPF and FFWPU volunteers met the Thai ambassador to Sweden, H.E. Soonthorn Chaiyindeepum, and introduced the World Peace Blessing project to him.

The event on June 30, 2018, had several parts. The first part was a conference titled "Human Development for Sustainable World Peace."

The master of ceremonies, Lorenz Jolin of FFWPU-Sweden, introduced UPF to the audience.

Six speakers from the United States, Thailand and Kashmir gave Christian, Buddhist and Muslim perspectives on the conference theme and spoke of the necessity of cooperation among different faiths.

This was followed by the World Peace Blessing of members of the Thai-Swedish community. In addition to the 21 international couples, several Thai wives came by themselves, carrying a photograph of their husband.

Participants were registered and photographed first. Ing-Marie Hedberg Kikuchi, the secretary-general of UPF-Sweden, acted as the emcee and gave a short introduction. The lectures were in Thai, but a written explanation in Swedish was handed out to the Swedish husbands.

The talks by Dr. Ronachit and his wife were well received, and there were many laughs when they talked about the Blessing and gave advice about marriage.

Before the ceremony a large group of distinguished Buddhist monks chanted and gave their blessing to the event.

Rev. David Hanna, the regional director of FFWPU for Northern Europe, and his wife, Kyung Ja, were the officiators at the Blessing.

Before and after the education and ceremony there were songs performed by Mr. James Houston. Also Dr. Ronachit sang a few songs in Thai that were very much appreciated.



After the family festival, the participants held a Peace March from the Courtyard Marriott Hotel to the Stockholm City Hall, where UPF held a ceremony to present the World Peace Awards.

Along with the awards ceremony, there were speeches and entertainment. Two FFWPU volunteers acted as emcees: Mikael Schöld and Kim Jolin.

Dr. David Hanna, the regional president of UPF for northern Europe, and Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, a member of Parliament from Nepal, both gave talks. Several Ambassadors for Peace were there, and UPF and its vision for peace were mentioned a lot.

The next day about a hundred participants went on a cruise to Finland, where they symbolically continued the Peace Road march.

Our group that had worked with the Family Festival briefly met Hannu Hassinen, national leader of FFWPU-Finland.

