UPF Switzerland holds Peace Road 2024 at Morgarten War Monument

Jean Metz, Romy Leggio, and Chantal Chetelat Komagata
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Morgarten, Switzerland - On July 27, 2024, a beautiful summer day, 24 people of 10 nationalities gathered for a Peace Road hike to Morgarten, a historic site where a famous battle took place in 1315. The 3.5 kilometer walk led the participants to a museum, where detailed information about the battle and its outcome was provided.

A monument commemorating the event bears the following inscription in German: "On 15 November, 1315 at Morgarten, the confederates fought, for God and the fatherland, the first battle for freedom."

Whether myth or reality, it all started in 1291 when three men, one from each of the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden, came together and pledged to support each other in maintaining peace and order in their region. They declared independence from the Habsburg (Austrian) Empire, the dominant power in the region. The founding document, the Federal Charter of 1291, has kept the country united against the ambitions of surrounding powers to this day.

Their autonomy was challenged by a Habsburg army in 1315. Driven by their fervent belief in God and their desire for freedom, the confederates - a group of farmers and herdsmen - won the battle against the elite army of the Habsburg king. Rather than fostering enmity, the battle inspired the populations of nearby cantons, including Luzern, Zug, and Zürich, to join the confederates within 40 years. Over time, more and more cantons became part of what is now known as Switzerland.

The Peace Road hikers continued their day with a picnic at Lake Oberägeri, and everyone enjoyed the afternoon, sharing food, swimming and reflecting about the importance of having a common vision and supporting one another to realize it.