

## Over 300 People Attend YAYAM's a Peace Starts With Me Workshop at UTS

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Among the many programs and events that happened in New York this past weekend in conjunction with the Peace Starts With Me rally, the American Youth and Young Adult Ministry (YAYAM) hosted a Peace Starts With Me Workshop at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) from November 10-12.

The workshop drew over 300 people from across the country, as well as a few international participants from Canada and Germany. Its purpose was to bring together the youth of the Family Federation and empower them to connect and contribute to the holistic vision of Peace Starts With Me, in addition to welcoming True Mother on the day of the rally.



Workshop co-directors and coordinators of the National Youth Ministry and the National Young Adult Ministry, Kaeleigh Moffitt and Tasnah Moyer, organized different messages and activities to reinforce each of these purposes throughout the weekend.

Rev. Mark Abernathy, Senior Pastor of the Connect Point Ministry in Snellville, Georgia, gave the opening remarks, inviting the participants to know and connect to the Christian roots of the Unification Movement in order to grow in personal vitality and gain confidence in God's calling for each of them.

Sun Jin Moon, International President of Family Federation, spoke to the participants the following morning, sharing the wisdom of True Parents as well as a testimony of her own journey to cultivate a

relationship of deep faith and love with them. She encouraged everyone to be the hope they wanted to see in the world, connecting their dreams and their passions to True Parents' vision of creating a peaceful world.

The workshop came to a close with several talks and reflection exercises, designed to make the idea of "Peace Starts With Me" real for the participants. This included a message from Tasnah about how peace flows from healing, which in turn flows from forgiveness, and a powerful opportunity for participants to experience finding and seeking forgiveness for pains received and given in their own lives.



The following morning, Naokimi Ushiroda, Director of YAYAM, and Mr. Koji Matsuda, Vice President of Youth and Students for Peace International (YSP), facilitated an activity designed to draw the connection between participants' gifts and the daily opportunities that surround them to apply those gifts as peacemakers. With that, the workshop concluded and all of the participants joined the rally at Nassau Coliseum as youth dancers which was a fitting close for the workshop.

### **Quotes from Participants**

"I need to be more active in trying to make the world a better place."

"Something I want to take away from this workshop is that I want to understand my parents more and appreciate their efforts more."

"I am God's love."

"Realizing my potential and what God wants me to do."

"Everyone is family."

"That if we have gratitude, like True Mother, we can overcome anything."

"That I don't have to worry if I'm not perfect enough. God is with me and it's gonna be fine."

"Peace starts within us and it is only possible through forgiving and asking for forgiveness."

"That I have to find peace and happiness in my life in order to spread it to others directly through my strengths."

"More clarity on what I'd like to do."

"We need to believe that we are capable of achieving great things."

"My impact on the world is much more important than I thought and that being strong and happy

will bring strength in me to push forward."

"My trust in God is not yet boundless but it is of utmost importance."

"One insight that I got from this was that no matter how big the end goal is the first step I take will always be the most important and I shouldn't wait for someone else to take that first step."



"If I want to practice peace in my community, I have to mend the relationships in my family."

"I learned it really only takes one person and that one person can be me. Also that True Mother truly lives for the sake of others and has such a beautiful, loving heart."

"We are not supporters but participants. We are not managers, but we have an active role in creating history."

"What I am going through isn't just my difficulty but it is also the difficulties True Parents has/had to go through but even more extreme."

"We must show others what it means to follow True Parents. And we can't keep what we have to ourselves but we must share with our Christian brothers and sisters and all our brothers and sisters. I also felt a lot of hope in the American movement."

