

FFWPU USA: Grassroots Movement Of Elders Impact Our Communities

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"Grassroots is where it all begins," said Rev. Richard Buessing, national director of FFWPU USA's Senior Pastors' Association (SPA). "If [our communities] hold meetings with elders and have someone who is an elder bring elders together - either on Zoom or in a gathering somewhere - they start to share. And then they come up with ideas, and through these ideas, they help contribute more to the community."

Unificationist elders across the country are making a difference in their communities in a variety of ways. Rev. Buessing encouraged more gatherings among elders while highlighting their latest endeavors during a Nov. 29 national leaders' meeting. In Denver, he shared how the community's seniors regularly offer child care for younger couples who need a break or time away together.

"The child care that started in Denver has now spread throughout other cities, including Chicago and New York," he said. "When [we] do things locally, they can have an impact because other places around the country learn about them, and that's what happens when people start to share, especially elders. They have so much to share."

Rev. Buessing noted that the movement's elders often provide a wealth of knowledge and wisdom as a great resource for the next generation. Community elders also share their abilities and insights with the greater public, leading by example in outreach efforts and conveying their faith.

"Dr. Tim Henning from Arizona started sharing slide presentations [of the Divine Principle] with one of

his elementary school teachers who had a vision that God is [a parent]," said Rev. Buessing. "He ended up teaching this individual the whole Divine Principle." Since then, the couple has received the Marriage Blessing and read other Unification texts, including True Mother's memoir and True Father's autobiography.

But that's not all. While Florida state leader Rev. Richard Sapp has devoted more than two decades to feeding the homeless and low-income families in and around Jacksonville every week, Rev. Larry Krishnek has dedicated time to working with and educating young politicians in Bellingham, Wash. "At a [local] UPF event, one young legislator has been really on fire and very supportive of Rev. Krishnek," said Rev. Buessing. "They've met many times."

On the East Coast, a young Unificationist in New York is now looking to duplicate the ever-popular "Golden Age" banquet in New Jersey that celebrates the contributions and influence of our elders. Rev. Buessing credits the movement's national leadership with inspiring a new wave of investment from our early pioneers.

"Through Dr. Yong and President Naokimi, 'Morning Devotion' has brought a new spirit to America," he said. "I've never seen anything like it. We've tried to do so many prayer conditions every day for the whole nation, but Dr. Yong's Morning Devotion program has transformed hearts."

Rev. Buessing also pointed to new "family reunion" style church services - held in Clifton, New Jersey, and Dallas, among other places - that have "brought so many of our elders together, members that recommitted in a whole new way that we see every day," he said. "I feel the growth and future development of our movement."