

## UPF Washington DC's Second Interfaith Prayer Forum at The Washington Times

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August 28, 2019



Over 60 participants gathered for the Second Interfaith Prayer Forum at The Washington Times Beech Room on August 28, hosted by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA. The forum, described as a "gathering of like-minded souls seeking lasting peace beyond religious boundaries," featured a multitude of speakers who discussed their perspectives on interfaith harmony and peace.



Rhonda Williams, UPF-VA Outreach Director, welcomed guests with readings on peace from Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. She also spoke about Dr. Moon's exciting Peace Starts With Me revival events. An informational video followed, highlighting some of UPF's worldwide activities.

The forum officially kicked off with Bishop Keith Allen, pastor of the historic Rehoboth Church of God

in Christ Jesus in Baltimore, who offered a Christian view on interfaith harmony. He stated, "If everyone understood how peace begins and grows, then it can be translated to the nation and eventually the world." Bishop Allen then asked the audience, "How can we reconcile our differing views?" He suggested that everyone must find common ground to engage in discussions.



Bhante Katugastota Uparatana Maha Therea, Buddhist Chaplain at the American University in Washington, D.C. and founder of the International Buddhist Center, emphasized that "true peace must come from within oneself...so that you can care for your partner and children." To help form this mindset, he encouraged everyone to adopt this chant: "May I be free from suffering, may I be free from illness, may I be free from fear, may I be free from anger, may I be free from hatred, may I find peace and tranquility."

Imam Naeem Baig, Co-chair of the National Muslim-Christian Initiative, said, "We are never alone in our lives. People take care of us, give us comfort, especially when we can't take care of ourselves. Thus, we become part of a family, a tribe and nation; we are together." He advised that people should help both the oppressed and the oppressor. "Stop [the oppressor's] bad behavior!" Baig proclaimed. "Faith leaders must be vocal, not quiet. God challenges us in the Quran: 'Good and evil are not the same, repel evil with something that is good. What will happen? The one you disliked will become your friend.'"

The final speaker was Mrs. Aisha Kha. Mrs. Kha met Dr. Moon while attending the International Leadership Conference in Korea and was so impressed by her leadership and heart that she decided to join UPF. During her speech, she stated, "We all should actively participate in peace making. Realizing that we are one family under God is so important and essential to bringing lasting peace. All religions want peace, we just need to work together." She concluded with a prayer asking God to give Dr. Moon a long life so she may continue to guide us to lasting peace.

Following the speakers, Rev. Susan Fefferman, Coordinator of Ambassadors for Peace, appointed three new Ambassadors for Peace: Speaker Bhante Uparatana, David Salik, who was recently recognized with his wife, Diana, as [Parents of the Year](#), and Mrs. Sonia Reyes, CEO and founder of Family Life Consulting Services in the Washington, D.C. area.

To conclude the program, a toast was made to creating peace through ideal families filled with love, sacrifice and living for the sake of others.