

Fourteen attended the FFWPU's Pastors' Boot Camp 2016

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Fourteen current, aspiring, and transitioning pastors attended the Pastors' Boot Camp, from June 9-12. Gathering initially at the 12th floor offices of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA National Ministry Team, the pastors, who came from around the country, were given a chance for a tour. They met members of the media team, accounting staff, Blessing and Family Ministry, as well as other affiliated organizations and resources that they can count on for support with their work in the field. Demian Dunkley, director of evangelism, gave a presentation on the necessity of pastors' forming and sharing their vision to gather and encourage a team that is both united and accountable.

In the evening, Dr. Balcomb invited the attendees to a delicious dinner at Bianca's. He took time to discuss with those around him their interest and calling in ministry.



Early the next morning, we were already up and ready to start the day. Boot camp is boot camp. Though there were no long marches or pull-ups in the schedule, we did start with 6:00 a.m. study and discussion of True Parents' words. Specifically, we read from Book 9 of the Cheon Seong Gyeong, "How To Be A Spiritual Leader." Passages like the following offered much food for thought and created the base for a fruitful day together: "The offering of devotions is a lifeline for people who take the path of serving God. Like a water pipe that carries water from the source, the offering of devotions should be constant."

Friday morning, the Bootcamp moved to New Jersey where we were hosted in the most welcoming style by Pastor Manoj Jacob and the Clifton Family Church. Pastor Manoj, along with Bay Area Family

Church pastor, Rev. Kevin Thompson served as the main presenters. Their topics included “Living a Life of Condition,” “Setting a Schedule You Can Live With,” and points of good governance. Along with practical education necessary for pastors to do their job well were shared plenty of life lessons earned over years of investing heart and time into a mission and learning from both the mistakes and successes gained along the way.

“I encourage you to never give up, don’t give up, don’t give up,” were the closing remarks made by Rev. Thompson. Wise advice indeed in that perfection cannot be gained in ignorance, and knowledge doesn’t come without enduring the difficult times that we know we’ll experience when we seriously pursue our life goals.



Rev. Thompson had illustrated this for us in his very first talk titled “CRAFT Your Message.” He told a very funny story about giving his very first lecture as a new Unificationist to a very smart, very rational and very well-educated Stanford University student. Not even sure yet if he himself believed in God, he did his best. With sweat pouring down his back, he endeavored to convey the teaching that had inspired him to have hope for the world. When she failed to respond, his first response was to quit, “I’m never trying that again!” But as he thought about it more, he determined to get better and set about studying and practicing in a methodical way. As anyone who has heard Rev. Thompson teach will testify, he’s been successful in achieving that goal. His encouragement to the boot camp pastors was, “I want to make the Principle interesting. Do not deliver the Principle in a boring way!”

Other activities included an informative as well as sanctifying experience led by Mari Curry and Ayako Heller, who guided pastors in the multiplication of holy items received from True Mother that will soon be distributed to Unificationists around the country. New Jersey Young Adult Ministry leader Joe Leonard and Youth Ministry leader Raymond Burns also stopped by to share insights and wisdom based on the roles they play at Clifton Family Church. Nancy Jubb then had an opportunity to share about the program she runs in Clifton for marriage enrichment.

On Sunday, our final day together, participants traveled to East Garden’s Holy Ground for a special early morning prayer. Many of the pastors had not been to East Garden previously, so it was a very moving experience and an appropriate closing to the weekend.