

NYC Prayer Peace Starts With Me Breakfast: When we try hard, God tries harder

Demian Dunkley
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Under a dark blue glow of ambient lighting, a festive atmosphere engulfed the Grand Ballroom of the Manhattan Center as hundreds of guests attended a prayer breakfast on Saturday, December 21. A series of prayer breakfasts in New York and New Jersey have drawn more support and momentum for an upcoming Peace Starts With Me Clergy Rally: A New Hope For A Heavenly Unified World.

"When we try hard, God tries harder," said keynote speaker Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, regional chairman of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) North America. "Now more than ever we need prayers for America. We need to bring this country back to God." A co-sponsor of the prayer breakfasts and the rally, FFWPU-USA, has merged its efforts with the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). About 30,000 clergy are expected to attend the year-end rally, which will also be the official launch of the World Clergy Leadership Conference (WCLC).



"All religion is divided," said Dr. Kim. "Division is our social problem. Live your life for the sake of others, not yourself. And when you practice this life of faith you can build the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth." Dr. Kim shared that clergy are responsible to unite with God and Jesus and to shepherd their congregation toward uniting Christianity. His message, calling for peace and unity within individuals and communities, resonated with many guests.

"It was a blessing to see so many diverse people come together at this program," said one guest, Sheila Robinson. "We have conflict with people because it's a reflection of all the internal conflict we have with

ourselves. We have to first make peace internally, and then share that peace with others. If we don't love ourselves then we can't have that peace." Guests enjoyed a breakfast buffet along with worship and praise, including choral entertainment. "This is what it's all about, one family under God," said FFWPU-USA President Rev. Demian Dunkley.



The program also featured an introduction to the new Young Clergy Leadership Conference (YCLC), which will launch the evening of the rally and emphasizes the importance of religious youth leaders banding together. "I am so excited to be a part of this movement, a part of something bigger than myself," said Minister Harris Teah of Brooklyn. "People are thinking globally now. It is difficult as a human being to want to live for other people, but the concept of 'peace starts with me' is living for the sake of others, and the more I serve other people, [the more] I gain peace."

The rally on December 28 will feature keynote speaker and FFWPU co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who is concluding a global speaking tour promoting peace. She has been continuing the peacebuilding legacy of her late husband and FFWPU co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. The highly anticipated rally at Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey, will be the last of many that were held worldwide this year. "We need peace, and we need prayer back in our lives, in our communities, and in our schools," said Nichelle Medford, a guest at the prayer breakfast. "We need prayer to get through our day and armor ourselves with God's Word. And we need to come together as a people because no matter who you serve, it's the same God."

