

Bronx Family Church's Neighborhood Safety Summit Meeting with Police Precinct

Esteban Galvan
September 21, 2017



On September 21, 2017, the Bronx Family Church co-sponsored a neighborhood safety summit meeting in partnership with the 52nd Police Precinct of the Bronx to address questions and concerns from the local community regarding issues the neighborhood faces as well as the Bronx church center.

Invited guest speakers included three police officers representing the 52nd Precinct; New York City Councilman, Fernando Cabrera; Community Board 7 Chair, Adaline Walker Santiago; FFWPU New York (District 2) Pastor, Rev. Edner Pierre Louis; and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) representative, Lorna Galvan.

The hall was filled to capacity with many new faces in attendance. The atmosphere was passionate and serious, reflecting the strong desire of those gathered to solve problems in the neighborhood community in terms of its safety and betterment. Many expressed criticism as well as deep concern about the local issues of prostitution, larceny and drug abuse. The purpose of the program was made clear from the outset: to meet and talk together with an attitude of mutual respect, in order to develop mutual trust, to bring about unity, and to find ways to work together.

Discussion throughout the program was lively, and people spoke out strongly about their worries, anger and fears, and of ongoing threats coming from outside the neighborhood. Many people expressed their strong desire to fight for the sake of the community and declared that they are not going to leave the Bronx; rather, they are proud of the community and are committed to staying and making it better.

Everyone then joined together in prayer for the Caribbean Islands and for Mexico, for those who are suffering due to the devastation being caused by Hurricane Maria, especially in Puerto Rico, and for those in Mexico struggling to recover in the aftermath of the very recent earthquake.

The program concluded with a martial arts presentation by second generation Unificationists led by Vincent Belmonte, set to music from the movie, Rocky. The joyful spirit of the Unificationist youth seemed to fill the attendees with a bright feeling of solidarity and security. Afterward, everyone stayed to talk together, enjoying pizza provided by the 52nd Precinct and fruit that was prepared by the Bronx Unificationists.

“Among the three major public meetings we have held over the past six months, I think this was the most meaningful and productive,” said Rev. Esteban Galvan, the pastor of the Bronx church. “I could see and feel how True Parents created an environment in which people can share freely. Our way of conveying unconditional regard gives them the confidence that their words and their values mean something to us as well as to the local officials.”

The Unificationists in attendance also noticed that those who are unfamiliar with Unificationist teachings have slowly come to resonate with True Parents’ emphasis on true love, in addition to becoming more open with the Bronx Unificationists.

The Bronx Family Church has begun to develop a strong and harmonious relationship with the 52nd Precinct of the NYPD and other locals, as, Rev. Galvan has made the building available for the use of the community. “We are here to support and assist [the local community] in any way we can,” explained Rev. Galvan. He attributed his supportive attitude and unifying spirit to True Parents:

“The comprehensive training that I received from True Father, including three years at Unification Theological Seminary, four years as a Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) leader, and many years of Home Church ministry, has given me a foundation upon which I can see the value of Tribal Messiahship as a substantial, ongoing process based on the philosophy of true love.”