

## UPF-USA Ambassadors for Peace Study Peace Principles

Emiljun Rapada  
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New York, USA—UPF-USA held its first Introductory Leadership Seminar featuring the UPF Principles of Peace.

The seminar, which took place on March 19, 2016, at the Learning Center of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an affiliated organization, was designed to empower Ambassadors for Peace to become effective, peace-loving leaders.

The program began with a moving invocation given by Bishop Irene Wilder of the Faith Restoration Center in Brooklyn, New York, followed by a video presentation on UPF's core values and areas of work.



Over the next four hours the 26 participants studied and discussed three significant topics: 1) Vision for Peace: Universal Principles of Creation; 2) The Root Cause of Conflict; and 3) The Principles of Reconciliation.

With this seminar UPF-USA introduced a new approach to teaching the Peace Principles. Instead of just listening to a lecture, participants were asked to discuss and reflect on a question given to each group. Three groups were organized, and each was given different questions to discuss. Each participant could

offer personal reflections and experiences, which added more value and real-life perspective to the discussions.



Here are a few of the questions given to the groups to discuss, provided by the UPF-USA Peace Education Committee:

“Do you agree that humankind, not God, is responsible for the problems we see in today’s world? Do you think that humankind has the ability to overcome the problems? What would it take?”

“Does it really matter what a leader does in his or her personal life, as long as the leader is working to help others?”

“How can Ambassadors for Peace bridge the gaps between people of different racial, religious or ethnic backgrounds? How can they help bring enemies together?”

Most of the participants were so deeply engaged that the discussions ran overtime into the break periods. Every discussion brought forth powerful reflections and displays of emotion. Ambassador for Peace Rae Beth Maye said: “This is the most interesting and invigorating seminar that I have attended after so many years. I feel very inspired and hopeful.” Ambassador for Peace Margarita Cabral encouraged the participants to act on what they learned from the seminar by forming small groups in their communities and neighborhoods. Further, she said: “We have to go out to the community and we have to teach, we have to educate, we have to promote, and we have to facilitate not just for ourselves but for others. Most importantly, we have to evaluate and get feedback.” Finally, Rev. John Arias, pastor of the local Spanish-language FFWPU congregation, who led one of the groups, summarized his group’s discussion, which generally was reflective of all the groups.

The most inspiring reflection was that of Ms. Eve Harrison, a singer. She said: “Thank you for inviting me and sharing the Principles of Peace. This is the answer to my prayers. I will definitely be interested to become part of UPF.”

Rev. Desmond Green, the UPF-USA executive director for Caribbean affairs, led the participants in singing “Let There Be Peace on Earth” to conclude the seminar, at which time each participant received a certificate of attendance.

The participants expressed their excitement about their next meeting in April, when they will discuss how to contribute to UPF’s different areas of work, such as Interfaith Peacebuilding, Marriage and Families, and Youth and Service.