

## UPF's American Leadership Conference at the Elizabeth, NJ Family Church

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Elizabeth, NJ – In preparation for the "Peace Starts With Me" Rally and Concert, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) in cooperation with the Family Federation in Elizabeth hosted an American Leadership Conference on October 27 at the Elizabeth Family Church gathering more than thirty Christians and Muslims in the area.



The discussions were centered on the topic "Building Community and Society Beyond the Borders of Race and Religion". The conference was facilitated by Rev. Emiljun Rapada, Asst. Pastor of Family Federation and Director of UPF USA where three groups answered several questions such as "Why is living for the sake of others so important?" or "How can we balance the secular and sacred dimensions of culture?" Other questions include "Creating harmony between races, religions and nations" and "Original human value: the foundation for human rights".

Rev. Dr. Prince Adekoya, the President and CEO of SKADEK Empire gave the invocation while Rev. Mabau Ilemabila, the President of African New Hope Association welcomed all the participants. Rev.

Ricardo de Sena, President of UPF USA gave a brief presentation on the mission of the organization and the operating principles in achieving its ultimate goal – genuine and lasting peace. Two commentators, Mr Samme Muhammad of the Nation of Islam and Pastor Darryl Franklin of Family Federation gave their respective thoughts on the topic. They have known each other for more than a decade already and they love working and partnering together despite their different faith affiliation.



Several participants shared summary reports from the table discussions. Mr. Carlos Cabrera, the President of Junior Chambers International (JCI) Philippine New York concluded that love is the basic yet most important value in building a peaceful society and community. He stressed that the expression of "living for the sake of the others" is by loving one another regardless of differences. Dr. Adekoya agreed to the same while also advocating the respect for human rights. Sis Renee from the Nation of Islam emphasized strongly on how to create harmony between races, religions and nations starting with self-respect and respecting others. Everyone was in agreement that truly "peace starts with me".

