

UPF Las Vegas' Peace Forum - How Can Peace Emerge From Violence?

Leslie Rigney
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Las Vegas, NV – A Peace Forum was held at the CARP Learning Center, near to the University of Nevada in Las Vegas on Monday, October 16th. Fifteen participants attended to this very relevant forum. The topic came out of the recent tragic event in Las Vegas when 58 people died and more than 500 were injured. In the wake of this event, there have been numerous gatherings of people from all different backgrounds who have been affected directly or indirectly by this tragedy. These gatherings include prayer vigils, prayer services, candlelight vigils, meditations, a dedication of a peace garden and other expressions by public officials and business owners in Las Vegas.

Universal Peace Federation, Las Vegas was moved to have a forum where all participants could share their hearts and thoughts at this time. Leslie Rigney, executive director of UPF Nevada welcomed all the participants. There was a variety of people represented: entertainers, non-profit workers, refugees, students, mentors, and others. Two young ladies shared poetry about Peace, one entertainer spoke about finding value in comforting some of the injured people in the hospital, and another entertainer spoke of his commitment to bring healing through his music. A young lady who had been a victim of domestic violence was encouraged to see herself as a survivor. A lady who came as a refugee from Iran with her two children expressed how grateful she feels to be in America, that her children can become educated, at a high standard. Her daughters read a poem about peace she had just written. One man spoke about how stressful it was to grow up in Watts during the riots, as a child. He had been at the concert when the attack occurred and was reminded of this childhood trauma. Another woman who works for a civil rights organization expressed that we can all be part of the healing. Comiesha Monica Lenoir who moderated the event also spoke of the pain of losing two brothers to violence and her commitment to work for peace. Jim Rigney spoke about the Peace Principles, especially emphasizing the value of family and belief in a higher power.

Two Ambassadors for Peace were appointed: Jackie Sosa, with Congress for Racial Equality and Antonio Carnota, a professional musician. The evening ended with everyone singing “Lean on Me”, led by Little J Gambino and much sharing and warmth. We all felt empowered and hopeful for Las Vegas and for peace in the world!